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ABSTRACT

This document provides a summary of the 1987-1988 legislative and administrative changes made by the Australian Commonwealth government in social security and community services, employment, education, family law, immigration, housing, and health. (DB)

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1987 and 1988

Diary of Social Legislation and Policy

A co-operative publishing project of the National Institute of Economic and Industry Research, the Australian Institute of Family Studies and the Social Policy Research Centre

National Institute of Economic and Industry Research

Australian Institute of Family Studies

Social Policy Research Centre

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Contents

Introduction

Social security — 1987 *1*
Compiled by Diana Encel

Social security — 1988 *5*
Compiled by Diana Encel

Community services — 1987 *7*
Compiled by Diana Encel

Community services — 1988 *11*
Compiled by Diana Encel

Employment, unemployment and training — 1987 *13*
Compiled by Anthony King

Employment, unemployment and training — 1988 *17*
Compiled by Anthony King

Family law — 1987 *20*
Compiled by Margaret Harrison

Family law — 1988 *21*
Compiled by Margaret Harrison

Immigration — 1987 *22*
Compiled by Anthony King

Immigration — 1988 *25*
Compiled by Anthony King

Housing — 1987 *27*
Compiled by Anthony King

Housing — 1988 *29*
Compiled by Anthony King

Health — 1987 *30*
Compiled by Diana Encel

Health — 1988 *34*
Compiled by Diana Encel

List of Abbreviations

AACLAME	Australian Advisory Council on Languages and Multicultural Education
ABSEC	Aboriginal Secondary Assistance Scheme
ABSTUDY	Aboriginal Study Assistance Scheme
ACET	Australian Council for Employment and Training
ACIN	Australian Curriculum Information Network
ACPHER	Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation
AECA	Australian Early Childhood Association
AFAO	Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations
AHMC	Australian Health Ministers Conference
AIC	Assistance for Isolated Children
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AIMA	Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs
ALP	Australian Labor Party
AMA	Australian Medical Association
AMSAD	Australian Medical Society on Alcohol and Drugs
ANCA	Australian National Council on AIDS
ASEAS	Advanced Secondary Education Assistance Scheme
ATP	Adult Training Program
ATS	Australian Traineeship Scheme
AVCC	Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee
AYS	Australian Youth Service
AZT	Axidothymidine
BLMR	Bureau of Labour Market Research
CAE	College of Advanced Education
CBLMP	Community Based Labour Market Program
CEP	Community Employment Program
CES	Commonwealth Employment Service
COPQ	Council on Overseas Professional Qualifications
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CRAFT	Commonwealth Rebate for Apprentice Full-time Training
CRS	Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service
CSC	Commonwealth Schools Commission
CSHA	Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization
CSL	Commonwealth Serum Laboratories
CTEC	Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission
CTP	Community Training Program
CVP	Community Volunteer Program
CYSS	Community Youth Support Scheme
DACA	Disability Council of Australia
DEET	Department of Employment, Education and Training
DEIR	Department of Employment and Industrial Relations
FAS	Family Allowance Supplement
FIS	Family Income Supplement
FSSS	Family Support Services Scheme
FTA	Formal Training Allowance
HACC	Home and Community Care Program
HEAC	Higher Education Administration Charge

HECS	Higher Education Contribution Scheme
HELP	Health Education and Lifestyle Program
HLIC	Housing Loans Insurance Corporation
HMO	Health Maintenance Organisation
ITEC	Information Technology Centre
IVF	In Vitro Fertilisation
IYSH	International Year of Shelter for the Homeless
JET	Jobs, Education and Training
LEI	Local Employment Initiative
MAFI	Marginally Adjusted Family Income
NAATI	National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters
NACAIDS	National Advisory Committee on AIDS
NACSW	National Advisory Council on Social Welfare
NADU	Northern Australia Development Unit
NBEET	National Board of Employment, Education and Training
NBSL	National Biological Standards Laboratory
NCADA	National Campaign Against Drug Abuse
NDADS	National Drug Abuse Data Scheme
NEIS	New Enterprise Initiative Scheme
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
NHPP	National Health Promotion Program
NIEIR	National Institute for Economic and Industry Research
NMAA	Nursing Mothers Association of Australia
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSC	Overseas Student Charge
OSS	Occupational Share System
PEP	Participation and Equity Program
SAAP	Supported Accommodation Assistance Program
SAS	Secondary Allowance Scheme
SASP	Special Assistance for Students Program
SSRA	Social Security Review Advisory Committee
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TARS	The Accommodation Rights Service
TEAS	Tertiary Education Assistance Scheme
TPI	Totally and Permanently Incapacitated
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VYP	Volunteer Youth Program
WREIP	Women's Research and Employment Initiatives Program
YAC	Youth Access Centres

Introduction

This *Diary* summarises the legislative and administrative changes made in the social policy field during 1987 and 1988 by the Commonwealth government. The Diary provides a ready reference for research workers, and can also be used as a succinct and factual account of policy during the years covered. For the first time, education policies are covered by the Diary. This issue also sees the separation of community services from social security into a separate new section in line with the division in December 1984 of departmental and ministerial responsibilities.

The *Diary* follows the format of the 'diaries' prepared by Helen Ferber and published in R.B. Scotton and Helen Ferber (eds), *Public Expenditures and Social Policy in Australia* (2 volumes, Melbourne, Longman Cheshire, 1978 and 1980). These 'diaries' covered the years 1972 to 1978. The first *Diary* in the present series covered events for the calendar year 1980, with the events of each year since then being covered by an annual *Diary*, copies of which are available from the sponsoring Institutes and Centre. Events for the calendar year 1979 were recorded in supplements to the first three issues of the present series.

For reference to general economic policy or political events the reader is referred to the 'Diary of Recent Economic Events and Policy Statements' included in each issue of the *Australian Economic Review*, and to the 'Political Review' in each issue of *Australian Quarterly*.

This issue was edited by Anthony King of the National Institute of Economic and Industry Research. Deborah Whithear and Allyson Griffiths of the Australian Institute of Family Studies were responsible for preparation of the index and book production. Individual contributions from members of these three research institutes which sponsor the Diary are gratefully acknowledged.

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Social Security — 1987

Compiled by Diana Encel
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Families, Family Allowance and Family Allowance Supplement

1 January 1987: Family allowance payments for children aged 16 and 17 years were income tested from this date in accordance with the policy change announced in the 1986–87 Budget.
4 January 1987: The Minister for Social Security announced the formation of a new Cabinet subcommittee to draw together policies on income support, child protection and general welfare for Australian families. The Minister will be the chairperson. The sub-committee will begin its work by considering the proposals made by the Social Security Review.
13 May 1987: It was announced in the May Economic Statement, that family allowances will be income tested from 1 October 1987, with a threshold set at the annual joint parental taxable income of $50 000 for families with one child. For each additional child, the threshold will rise by $2500 before the payment is reduced by 25 cents for every dollar of additional income.
25 May 1987: The threshold for eligibility for family allowance, announced in the May economic statement, will be increased annually from January 1989 in accordance with the movement of the CPI between July and June in the previous financial year.
24 June 1987: The Minister for Social Security announced major changes in payments to low-income families with children. A new family allowance supplement (FAS) of $22 each week for every child under 13 years of age will be introduced from November–December. The benefit will be means tested on family income over $300 per week for families with one child. The total income before means testing increases by $12 for each additional child. Every dollar earned over these limits will reduce the benefit by 50 cents. An older child rate of $6 extra, each week, for every child between 13 and 15 years of age is also announced. This benefit is subject to the same means test applying to the basic family supplement. A disabled child allowance of $25.78 each week for each disabled child is not means tested. Special rent assistance of up to $15 each week will be introduced for low-income families in the private rental market, in December.
1 October 1987: Residence requirements for payment of family allowance were revised. Family allowance and additional pension or benefit will be payable for children overseas only if the child is an Australian citizen or has been an Australian resident and lives overseas with the person entitled to payment. Previously it had been possible for family allowance to be paid for a child who had never lived in Australia.
15 November 1987: The handicapped child's allowance was replaced by a child disability allowance (CDA), payable at the rate of $112 a month. The distinction between handicapped and severely handicapped children has been removed.

Entitlement to Social Security Benefits and Pensions, Including Income and Assets Tests

1 January 1987: Dual eligibility for social security payments and payments under the various Commonwealth education schemes was removed. Thus full-time students eligible for education allowance are precluded from unemployment, sickness and special benefits. 'Frozen' rates of social security payments apply to those with dual eligibility who are still completing a course.
26 February 1987: The Minister for Social Security announced an increase in the number of regional unemployment benefit review teams set up under last year's Budget provisions. Figures released on the activities of the teams to date reveal that one in four people selected for interview had their benefits cancelled while others had them reduced or increased.
15 March 1987: A new scheme to interview long-term unemployed people was announced, as part of the measures designed to tighten the welfare system. The interviews are also designed to inform clients about services available to them.
21 March 1987: The interview scheme for long-term unemployed people has been streamlined by the introduction of a new 12 point questionnaire.
23 April 1987: The Minister for Social Security announced steps to stop people on compensation 'double-dipping' in the social security system. From 1 May 1987 the method of treating compensation awards for sickness benefit purposes will be extended to cover people on unemployment and special benefits, invalid pensions and sheltered employment rehabilitation allowances. Payments to people who receive compensation for loss of earning will be recoverable. Compensation in these circumstances includes workers' compensation, third party insurance or damage payments. However, compensation for loss of faculty, pain and suffering and recovery of legal and/or medical expenses will be disregarded.
13 May 1987: It was announced in the May Economic Statement that the Government has decided to abolish unemployment benefit for 16 and 17

year-olds from January 1988, replacing it with a Job Search Allowance.

3 June 1987: The Minister for Social Security announced that from 11 June 1987 people in receipt of unemployment benefit must provide proof that they have informed the Commonwealth Employment Service of any change of address or risk losing their benefit. The CES can then keep job seekers informed about changing job prospects in different geographical areas.

25 June 1987: The Minister for Social Security announced that from 1 November 1987, pensioners will be able to earn up to $1000 from casual jobs without losing their fringe benefits or having their pension reduced.

26 June 1987: A joint announcement made by the Minister for Social Security and the Minister for Primary Industry covered the eligibility of people over 25 years of age who can prove that they are in hardship but who are not eligible for benefit under the exisitng assets test. They will be able to receive unemployment or sickness benefits under a new assets test, based on the pensions assets tests thresholds, with the following additional requirements: the client must be unable to sell the asset, that is, it must be on the market, but unable to be sold at a reasonable price; a person applying for hardship must not be in receipt of, or eligible for, any other form of Commonwealth assistance, including household support. If a property is not returning income equal to its commercial lease value, deemed income will be assessed. Specified debts are deducted from the value of the asset for assessment purposes.

1 July 1987: Medical impairment must constitute the major part of an incapacity qualifying a person for invalid pension from this date.

1 October 1987: Residence requirements for eligibility for pensions, benefits and allowances will be based on a uniform definition of 'Australian resident' from this date. The definition will generally preclude temporary entrants and prohibited non-citizens.

13 December 1987: The definition of 'income' for pension or benefit purposes was changed to ensure that the income from an investment that produces an ascertainable rate of return was deemed to have been received throughout the period of investment. Where the rate of return cannot be assessed, the investment income is averaged out over a twelve month period.

Pension and Benefit Rates and Procedures

1 January 1987: The maximum intermediate rate of unemployment benefit payable to beneficiaries aged 18–20 years, increased to $91.20 a week.

25 February 1987: It was announced that pension and benefit rates will be increased according to schedule on 25 June 1987. Single rate of pension will go up by $5.95 to $112.15, the combined rate will go up by $9.90 to $187. Single adult rate of unemployment benefit will increase by $5.55 to $104.75 and the combined rate will increase by $9.90 to $187. Measures to overcome poverty traps will start on 1 July 1987 as was announced first in September 1985 and deferred in August 1986.

2 June 1987: New procedures for admission to pension or benefit were introduced this week as part of the budget initiatives announced last August. Claim forms will now seek information about other family members, income, assets and compensation claims. Proof of identity requirements are incorporated. Information leaflets will tell clients about the new procedures, which are part of the Governments' overhaul of social security administration, designed to prevent overpayment and fraud.

13 June 1987: Following a policy change announced in the May Economic Statement, the rate of sickness benefit for unmarried sickness beneficiaries without dependants was 'frozen' as a first step towards aligning this rate with the rate of unemployment benefit for unmarried unemployment beneficiaries without dependants.

Benefits for Sole Parents

28 January 1987: The 12-weekly reviews of sole parents on Supporting Parents Benefit and the class A widow's pension, which were announced in the 1986–87 Budget are now in place. The new procedures allow the Department of Social Security to check clients' eligibility, along with changes in their circumstances. Changes in numbers of benefits being paid were announced.

13 May 1987: It was announced in the May Economic Statement that from September only children below the age of 16 years will qualify their parents for sole parent payments. Details of extra adult training places for sole parents and women who lack up-to-date workforce skills, and of extra child care places for sole parents on formal training programs will be announced by the Minister for Employment.

1 July 1987: From this date persons considered to be living as separated under one roof will be treated as married after co-residence continues for 6 months from 14th May.

28 August 1987: The Minister for Social Security and the Minister for Employment, Education and Training announced that sole parents who lose their pension between 1 September 1987 and 31 December 1987 because of the May Statement changes will retain eligibility for fringe benefits until the end of 1988. Sole parents in full time study and receiving a pension before 1 September 1987, will be able to stay on the pension until they complete their current course, even if their youngest child is over 16 years of age.

Fringe Benefits, Rent Assistance

25 February 1987: The income test on rent assistance for pensioners and beneficiaries will be abolished from 25th June 1987, it was announced today.
14 May 1987: It was announced that from 25 June 1987 the fringe benefit income limit will rise in accordance with rises in the CPI.
13 June 1987: The savings provision that preserved rent assistance for persons in Government subsidised housing at February 1982, was removed. That is, pensioners who live in public housing and have done so since before 1981, and who receive a double subsidy on their government rent, will have the extra social security assistance stopped as from 25 June 1987.
23 June 1987: From 1 January 1988 pensioners who hold Health Benefit Card will be able to retain the card for three months after their income increases over their fringe benefit level. This will be of particular benefit to pensioners who have income from overseas which may be subject to the rise and fall of exchange rates.
25 June 1987: The Minister for Social Security announced that from 1 November 1987, pensioners will be able to earn up to $1000 from casual jobs without losing their fringe benefits or having their pension reduced.
1 July 1987: Rent assistance changes came into force, providing that people receiving unemployment, sickness or special benefit can get up to $30 a week in private income and still be paid the maximum rent assistance which will automatically be included in their social security payments. Benefits will start to be reduced only if people receive more than $30 a week private income.
24 December 1987: The fringe benefit cut-off levels were increased in line with rises in the CPI. Under the new fringe benefits system, eligibility will cease during the three month period only if income exceeds $97.50 a week gross for a single person and $165 a week gross for couples, higher where there are children.

Social Security Information

4 March 1987: A new service in New South Wales will provide interpreters anywhere in the state. The Minister for Social Security announced that 250 sessional interpreters, who speak a total of 45 languages are on the books of the service.
13 April, 1987: The Department of Social Security has appointed its first migrant and Aboriginal information officers, specialist journalist positions in the Information Section, Canberra, designed to assist with the development, implementation and co-ordination of Social Security's national migrant and Aboriginal information programs.
4 July 1987: Funding of an innovative Department of Social Security program to help isolated Aboriginal communities has been extended until June 1988. The program funds Aboriginal Community Agents in areas where Aboriginals face problems in receiving correct payments. Ten such communities are involved, four in the Northern Territory.
14 December 1987: The Minister for Social Security launched a campaign to inform young people leaving school about the cooperation between the Department and the Commonwealth Employment Service to help them to find a job. The campaign will include the use of a video produced jointly by the Department of Social Security and the Department of Employment, Education and Training.
2 December 1987: The Minister for Social Security announced a special campaign to make sure that ethnic families get the benefit of the new Family Allowance Supplement being introduced in December.

Social Security Appeals Tribunal

19 March 1987: The Minister for Social Security announced the appointment of a principal member to the Social Security Appeals Tribunal in each State and Territory, who will sit with the tribunal and also be responsible for administration.

Child Maintenance: Child Support System

24 March 1987: The Minister for Social Security announced the introduction of a new system of support for children of separated parents. Under its provisions a new Child Support Agency, under the control of the Commission of Taxation will be set up to assess child support obligations according to a legislative formula. Parents will be able to take appeals against Agency decisions to court. Maintenance will be collected through the Agency's tax collection mechanisms for pay-as-you-earn parents or in monthly payments from the self-employed. It will be distributed through the Department of Social Security.
22 May 1987: The members of a consultative group to advise the government on a formula for the new child support system were announced.
9 December 1987: Legislation to set up the Child Support Agency was introduced into Parliament. In addition to the provisions previously described, details about those to be covered were announced. Those covered would include: parents who separate after the start of the scheme; children born after the start of the scheme where parents have never lived together; people on social security regardless of the separation date. Secrecy provisions are incorporated in the scheme.

Compensation for Commonwealth Employees

2 April 1987: The Minister for Social Security and the Minister for Finance announced that the Government had approved a comprehensive package of reforms to Commonwealth employees compensation, to replace existing arrangements including the common law negligence action. It will establish a framework to maximise the chance of successful return to employment and to minimise permanent physical or mental impairment or its consequences. An interim Commission is to be established immediately.
2 October 1987: The appointment of Ms Sandy Halley as Head of the interim Commonwealth Employees' Compensation and Rehabilitation Commission was announced. The interim Commission is preparing a new Act and administration.

Advisory Committees

2 June 1987: The National Advisory Council on Social Welfare (NACSW) established in 1983, with ten members who have knowledge of welfare issues, which has strong links with community groups, will be directly responsible to the Minister for Social Security, it was announced today.
November 1987: The Department of Social Security Women's Consultative Committee met for the first time in its present form, that is, with representatives of all States and Territories, union representatives and women with special knowledge of Aboriginal, migrant and public contact issues.
December 1987: The Social Security Advisory Council was formed through the amalgamation of the Social Security Review Advisory Committee (SSRA) and the National Advisory Council on Social Welfare (NACSW). Its terms of reference are to advise the Minister for Social Security on issues relating to the development and administration of social security policy and the Social Security Review.

Social Security Act

5 June 1987: The level of penalties for offences under the *Social Security Act 1947* were increased to correspond with levels in other Commonwealth legislation and provisions of the Act relating to criminal prosecution were simplified, clarified and updated. The secrecy provisions of the Act were extended to bind officials who have access to confidential information but who do not have duties or functions under the Act. Provisions of the Act administered by the Minister for Community Services were repealed and consequential amendments made to coincide with the start of the *Disability Services Act 1986*.

Portability and Reciprocity

7 July 1987: Legislation for revision of reciprocal social security arrangements with New Zealand has been passed. The agreement will ban unemployment benefit for New Zealanders who have been in Australia for less than six months and set strict new rules for eligibility for the next six months, including evidence of long-term plans to settle in Australia or an acceptable work history (two months paid work in Australia prior to application). It will also cover supporting parents' and domestic purposes benefit for the first time, but ban eligibility for the first six months after arrival. The new agreement will be in full operation from 1 October 1987.

Social Security Conspiracy Case

23 October 1987: The Minister for Social Security announced that victims of the alleged 'social security conspiracy case' have only until 30 November 1987 to lodge outstanding claims for compensation. The Government has already processed and finalised most claims.

Social Security Review

During 1987 the Social Security Review produced one issues paper, *Bringing Up Children Alone: Policies for Sole Parents*, and eight background/discussion papers.

Social Security — 1988

Compiled by Diana Encel
Social Policy Research Centre

Job Search Allowance

1 January 1988: The Job Search Allowance announced in the May Economic Statement (1987) replaced unemployment benefits for 16- to 17 year-olds. The payment depends on an activity test and a parental income-test. It places major emphasis on getting young people into jobs. Those who receive the allowance for six months will be required to accept jobs or training positions offered to them by the Commonwealth Employment Service. The allowance will not be indexed until January 1989.

Family Allowance and Family Allowance Supplement

1 January 1988: Family Allowance Supplement is to replace AUSTUDY paid to student parents for dependent children from this date.
25 May 1988: It was announced in the May Economic Statement that from December, families eligible for both Family Allowance and Family Allowance Supplement (FAS) will receive a single combined payment each fortnight. At present the former is paid monthly and FAS is paid fortnightly. An assets tests will be placed on the FAS from 1 January 1989. Families with net assets of $300 000 or more, excluding the family home, will not be eligible.
30 August 1988: New FAS rates to be paid from December have been announced. Families on low incomes (i.e. a one child family earning $300 a week or less) will be paid $24 a week for children under 13 years and $31 a week for children aged 13 to 15 years. Eligibility for FAS will now be based on income received in the previous financial year, so that extra income in any one four week period will be evened out.

Pension and Benefit Rates

1 January 1988: The Young Homeless Allowance is increased to $76 from this date.
5 June 1988: The Minister for Social Security announced new rates to apply to pensions and Supporting Parent's Benefit from 23 June, and to other benefits from 13 June 1988. The single pension rate will increase to $120.05 and the married rate to $200.10 combined a week. Unemployment, Sickness and Special Benefit rates will increase to $112.10 a week (single), $54.05 (single adults with a child under 13 years) and $200.10 (married couples, combined).
12 December 1988: New pension and benefit rates will come into effect on 13 December and 22 December 1988. The single pension rate will rise to $124.25 a week, the combined married rate to $207.10, Unemployment, Sickness and Special Benefit rates to $116.00 single, $160.25 (single adult with one child under 13) and $207.10 (couple). Job Search Allowance, Sickness and Special Benefit for under 18 year-olds will increase to $53.55; Unemployment, Sickness and Special Benefit rates for 18- to 20 year-olds will be $97.70 a week. The Young Homeless Allowance will increase to $81.40 a week.

Entitlement to Social Security, including Income and Assets Test.

1 January 1988: Earnings on deferred income investments, including friendly society bonds will be assessed as regular income for purposes of determining eligibility for pensions and benefits from this date.
1 February 1988: Eligibility for Carer's Pension has been extended to people who are not close relatives from this date. Couples on Unemployment, Sickness or Special Benefit living apart indefinitely due to illness or infirmity each become eligible for single rate benefit and rent assistance.
8 February 1988: The Minister for Social Security announced changes to provisions governing treatment of compensation awards and settlements. The changes come into effect on 9 February and from that date 50 per cent of any lump sum will be deemed to be for economic loss. Social security payments will be recovered and preclusion periods calculated on that basis.
15 February 1988: Under changes made in the 1987–88 budget eligibility for Orphans Pension is extended to cover a child with one parent dead and the other living indefinitely in a nursing home or similar institution.
25 May 1988: It was announced in the May Economic Statement that Social Security clients who wish to be paid overseas must now complete a pre-departure certificate, obtainable from a DSS regional office. Overseas payments will be reviewed at six-monthly intervals. Supporting Parent's Benefit and Widow's Pension will be paid to Australians living overseas for a maximum of 12 months, with exceptions for certain cases. Aboriginal students will be eligible for a single special purpose assistance scheme known as ABSTUDY. This scheme will cover students at both school and tertiary levels; allowances will be linked to those under AUSTUDY. A

new standard medical certificate will be introduced from 1 November 1988 for the purposes of assessing eligibility for Sickness Benefit.
5 June 1988: The Minister for Social Security announced that new indexed Asset Test threshold limits will apply from 23 June (for pensioners) and 12 June (for recipients of Unemployment, Sickness and Special Benefit).
15 June 1988: Eligibility for payment of Sheltered Employment Allowance was extended to participants in supported employment services.
23 August 1988: From 1 December 1988 market-linked investment income will be included in the assessment for eligibility for pensions under provisions of the 1988–89 Commonwealth Budget.

Fringe Benefits, Rent Assistance

1 January 1988: Pensioner Health Benefit card holders are allowed to retain their fringe benefits for 3 months after their private income exceeds the cut-out limits by up to 25 per cent from this date.
23 August 1988: It was announced in the 1988–89 Budget that rent assistance will rise from $15 a week to $20 for pensioners who are renting privately, starting from June 1990.

Social Security Review

19 January 1988: The fourth issues paper, *Income Support for the Unemployed — Towards a More Active System*, was released by the Social Security Review.
July 1988: The fifth issues paper, *Towards Enabling Policies: Income Support for People with Disabilities* was released by the Social Security Review.
24 October 1988: The sixth issues paper, *Towards a National Retirement Incomes Policy* was released. During 1987 the Review also published five background/discussion papers.

Child Support

23 February 1988: The Child Support Scheme was endorsed by the Senate.
20 April 1988: The Minister for Social Security announced the introduction of the Child Support Scheme from 1 June 1988. The functions of State and court-based maintenance collection agencies will be gradually taken over by the Child Support Agency. Conditions and exemptions were outlined.
10 May 1988: Recommendations of the Child Support Consultative Group were tabled to-day. The formula for assessment of support amount takes into account both custodial and non-custodial parents' incomes. The recommendations affect only Stage 2 of the Child Support Scheme. Stage 1 which will come into effect on 1 June 1988 will operate using amounts decided by the courts.
2 June 1988: The Queensland government has agreed that its ex-nuptial children should be included in the provisions of the scheme.
17 June 1988: Changes were made, operative from this day, to the treatment of maintenance in the *Social Security and Veteran's Entitlement (Maintenance Income Test) Amendment Act 1988* to coincide with the establishment of the Child Support Agency. A separate income test has been imposed on maintenance income with a free area of $15 plus a week for each additional child. Amounts received in excess of that sum will reduce payments by 50 cents in the dollar except in specified cases. Maintenance income will include cash in kind payments and capital transfers. The requirements that a sole parent pensioner must take reasonable action for maintenance was clarified and strengthened. A provision was enacted to protect the current level of total income of existing recipients who might otherwise have been disadvantaged by the child support amendments.

Reciprocity and Portability

16 March 1988: An agreement with Italy on reciprocal social security agreement has been signed but still not ratified.
4 July 1988: A reciprocal social security agreement with Canada has been signed and will take effect in April 1989.
8 August 1988: The social security agreement with New Zealand is to be revised. From 1 April 1989, New Zealand will meet the cost of pensions paid to New Zealanders in Australia.
1 September 1988: The reciprocal agreement with Italy came into effect.

Compensation for Commonwealth Employees

27 April 1988: The Minister for Social Security and the Minister for Finance announced details of the Government's new compensation scheme for Commonwealth employees, to be called Comcare. Comcare will stress prevention and rehabilitation; it will offer an earnings-based system of major benefits for injured workers. The benefits payable under the scheme were outlined: 100 per cent of pre-injury earnings will be paid for 45 weeks; thereafter payments will continue at 75 per cent; lump sum payments for specified permanent injuries will rise to a maximum of $80 000; there will be a no-fault pain and suffering payment of up to $30 000; death benefits will rise to $120 000; low income earners will receive payments of up to 90 per cent of their previous earnings after 45 weeks.
1 July 1988: Comcare came into effect. Provision for access to common law under the legislation has been defined.

21 September 1988: Three commissioners have been appointed to Comcare.

Taxation

25 May 1988: It was announced in the May Economic Statement that the pensioner tax rebate will be lifted in 1988–89 to $430, so that pensioner income up to $6892 will not be taxed and provisional tax will only have to be paid if 1987–88 income exceeds $10 332.
23 August 1988: Under provisions of the 1988–89 Budget the Special Temporary Allowance (STA) paid to a widow or widower after the death of their partner is to be exempt from tax.

Social Security Information

16 February 1988: The first information video produced by the Department of Social Security in an Aboriginal language was released to-day.
19 May 1988: A national toll free hotline has been established to answer queries about the new Child Support Scheme which comes into operation on 1 June 1988.
16 December 1988: The Department of Social Security has released its first videos in Torres Strait Island languages.
19 December 1988: The Minister for Social Security discussed the recently established Northern Australia Development Unit (NADU) which is involved in the development of social security services for remote communities and Northern Australia generally.

Social Security Appeals Tribunal

25 May 1988: The Social Security Appeals Tribunal will have final decision making power from 1 November 1988. Clients and the Department will retain the right to appeal to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

Social Justice Strategy

25 May 1988: The Minister for Social Security and the Minister for Employment, Education and Training announced the development of programs and policies to encourage disadvantaged groups, in particular the long-term unemployed and sole parents, to enter the workforce and to re-establish their economic independence. The government is also working towards a comprehensive Aboriginal education policy to complement the Aboriginal Employment Development Policy which was announced in 1982.

Community Services — 1987

Compiled by Diana Encel
Social Policy Research Centre

Children's Services

5 January 1987: Details were released of grants to expand home-based child care services in New South Wales and Queensland. The Minister for Community Services announced that funding will come from the Children's Services Program for the expanded service. Grants for similar services in other States were announced in following months.
27 January 1987: The Government will provide funds for the establishment of additional occasional care centres in New South Wales. Capital grants, grants for equipment and a contribution towards the running costs of the centres has been announced by the Minister for Community Services. Fee subsidies will enable the centres to offer reduced fee rates to families in receipt of pensions, benefits or family income supplement. The approvals are consistent with the Government's commitment to establish 3000 new occasional care places in the two years ending June 1988. Grants for similar services in the other States were announced in the following months.
28 January 1987: Children of non-English-speaking-background, children with disabilities and Aboriginal children will benefit from a series of special grants to child care services. The Minister for Community Services announced details of the funding under the Children's Services Program in Queensland on this date and in the other States during the following weeks.
13 February 1987: The Lady Gowrie Child Care Centre's Contact Outreach project is to receive Federal Government funding to employ an additional outreach worker to help develop child care services for children in remote and isolated areas.
2 March 1987: Grants totalling $100 000 were announced by the Minister for Community Services to enable the Sydney-based Community Child Care Co-Operative Ltd to provide a management consultancy service for child care centres. The service will offer training and advice to staff and management committees of child care centres jointly funded by the Commonwealth and State Governments under the Children's Services Program.
30 March 1987: An increase in recurrent funding to take effect from 1 April 1987 will ensure the

continuation of extended hours child care centres throughout Australia, in areas where there is a strong demand for the service.

15 September 1987: The 1987–88 Budget provides $235 million to be spent on new and existing child care services. The Government plans to meet its 1984 election commitment to an additional 20 000 places by December 1988. The Budget also provides increases in funding in a number of elements of the Children's Services program, including increases in real terms in the operational subsidy for Family Day Care schemes and Outside School Hours Care services.

Supported Accommodation Assistance Program

9 January 1987: Details of grants for crisis accommodation and support services for homeless people in the Northern Territory were announced by the Minister for Community Services and the Northern Territory Minister for Community Development. The grants, under the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP), total more than $200 000. The Darwin Aboriginal Women's Shelter is the first of its kind; funding is provided under a joint program which provides crisis accommodation run by community organisations.

21 January 1987: The Minister for Community Services released an outline of initiatives to assist homeless people under SAAP, a joint Commonwealth-State program which currently provides funding for over 700 services which operate some 1000 outlets.

22 January 1987: A national evaluation of the SAAP is to be conducted during 1987, the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless. The evaluation will be conducted in close consultation with service providers, representatives of their umbrella organisations as well as broader community groups with an interest in the problems faced by homeless people.

30 January 1987: Additional funding has been allocated to three Melbourne night shelters to enable the implementation of the recommendations of the Review of the Homeless Persons Assistance Program.

13 February 1987: Funds have been allocated from the SAAP to the Darwin Community Rape Counselling Group to establish a service for the Northern Territory.

5 July 1987: Details were announced of extra funds to provide new, expanded and upgraded services for the homeless in New South Wales.

15 September 1987: The Government will provide $4 million over the next two years, under provisions announced in the 1987–88 Budget, to upgrade five large Sydney refuges for homeless people, subject to agreement with the NSW Government to incorporate the refuges into the SAAP.

Dementia

12 January 1987: Grants totalling $2.5 million were announced by the Minister for Community Services, under the Dementia Grants Program which aims to stimulate and encourage the development of special activities for hostel residents who are suffering from dementia. The grants, $1.6 million in 1986–87 and $0.9 million in 1987–88, will benefit 1330 hostel residents in 93 hostels.

2 July 1987: The Government has approved a grant of $49 800 for research projects to assess the effectiveness of day care centres in reducing the anxiety and depression levels of the caregivers of people with dementia, and to evaluate special hostel programs for dementia sufferers.

Home and Community Care

15 January 1987: The Ethnic and Communities Council has been allocated $42 864 for a research project under the Home and Community Care (HACC) program. The funding was announced by the Minister for Community Services and the Victorian Minister for Community Services. The research project will look at existing programs and services for older people and people with disabilities who are able to remain in their own homes and consider ways in which they might be developed to assist people with non-English-speaking-backgrounds. The project will focus in particular on the provision of food services.

12 March 1987: New home maintenance services to help elderly and disabled people are the most significant new services provided by the HACC program. The services, to be run by local government alongside existing home help programs, will cover basic home maintenance services such as fixing doors, windows and hazardous steps. Commonwealth grants for the service were announced in Victoria on this date and in other States during the following weeks.

15 September 1987: There is to be an increase of more than $42 million over 1986–87 expenditure for the HACC program, announced in the 1987–88 budget. The responsibility for the Veteran's Home Help program will rest with HACC from 1 December 1987. Additional unmatched funds will be provided to HACC to assure that veterans and war widows presently receiving services continue to do so.

Disability Services

21 January 1987: The Minister for Community Services and the South Australian Minister for Health announced the purchase by the State, from the Commonwealth, of a rehabilitation complex.

The State will assume funding responsibility for the provision of outpatient medical rehabilitation services for head injury patients from 1 June 1987. The Commonwealth will continue with its program of establishing a network of decentralised community based vocational and rehabilitation services to people with disabilities. Similar re-organisations in other states were announced in the following months.

23 January 1987: An evaluation of disability services demonstration projects will be carried out in 1987.

2 March 1987: The last grants for new employment, training, residential and recreational services under existing legislation for the Commonwealth Disability Services Program were announced today. The 25 projects are in line with the conditions of the new legislation and include a number of citizen advocacy projects.

15 September 1987: Funding announced in the 1987–88 Budget provides $207 million for disabilities services programs. Some 84 new services have been approved under the new *Disability Services Act*. An additional $6 million is being provided this year for improving existing funded services. Thirteen new regional rehabilitation units are expected to be established during the year. Funding for the attendant care scheme established in the 1986–87 Budget will be $4 million this year and $6.5 million in the 1988–89 budget.

Aged Residential Care

27 January 1987: Residential care facilities for aged people will be significantly expanded following approvals of new places in hostels and in nursing homes announced by the Minister for Community Services, under commitments made in the August Budget. The new beds have been distributed on the advice of the Federal–State Co-ordinating Committees in each State and Territory. The Committees will be replaced by the Aged Care Advisory Committee early in 1987, to provide future advice.

25 February 1987: Details of grants to 29 assessment projects to be made by the Federal Government were announced by the Minister for Community Services. The projects will help aged people assess their requirements for residential care and other services and to ensure that they obtain the form of accommodation best suited to their needs. They will be funded under the Geriatric Assessment Program.

31 March 1987: Measures to implement the second stage of a national aged care policy designed to provide greater choice of care for aged people and equity between the states were announced today by the Minister for Community Services. The measures build on decisions in the 1986–87 budget to spend significant additional sums over a three year period. The main elements of the measures relate to specific quality of care requirements for nursing homes, protection from cost increases during the introduction of new arrangements, an increase in the personal care hostel subsidy over five years from May 1988 and new funding arrangements to be phased in from 1 July 1987 to 1 July 1991.

30 April 1987: Non-government nursing homes in Victoria are to receive an increase in maximum benefits of $1 a day from 1 May 1987, to avoid hardship which could be caused by the Nurses' award. Benefit levels will be increased in all States from 1 July 1987 when new nursing home funding arrangements commence.

10 May 1987: The *Nursing Homes and Hostels Legislation Amendment Bill 1987* was introduced into Federal Parliament by the Minister for Community Services. The main aspects of the new legislation are: specific quality of care requirements; measures to protect residents from cost increases during the introduction of the new arrangements; an increase in the personal care hostel subsidy over five years from May 1988; and new funding arrangements.

20 May 1987: Grants for the construction of accommodation for frail aged people were announced by the Minister for Community Services in the first funding round under the Government's new planning strategy.

10 June 1987: The formation of Aged Care Advisory Committees in each State and Territory was announced. Their major responsibility is to provide advice and information on the needs of elderly people within their State or Territory, for nursing home or hostel care. The committee's membership consists of federal and state representatives and a number of people who have been appointed on the basis of their experience and knowledge in the field.

19 June 1987: Legislation introduced last month has received Royal Assent. Standard grants based on the actual cost of employing staff in relation to residents' assessed service needs and to operating costs will be phased in from 1 July 1987 to 1 July 1991.

25 June 1987: Benefit level adjustments for residents in non-government nursing homes will in future be made on 1 July. New arrangements for determining fees will also apply from 1 July 1987. The objective is to have only one fee increase each year and for that increase to correspond with the benefit increase.

3 August 1987: The Government has begun to distribute brochures on aged care as part of an awareness campaign to promote hostels as an alternative to nursing homes. Special priority will be given to services that enable elderly people to maximise their independence, services such as hostels and home and community care.

15 September 1987: An increase in funding for residential programs was announced in the Budget, bringing total funding to $141 million, an increase of 11 per cent. During 1987–88 uniform nursing and personal care staffing standards will be developed; proposals for exempt nursing home beds will be considered, together with improved arrangements for respite care. New hostel capital funding and planning arrangements are proposed and the hostel personal care subsidy will be increased.

23 September 1987: Proposed changes to the Commonwealth hostel program for elderly people released today in the discussion document *Equitable Funding Base for Hostels*, would mean a better geographical distribution and more equitable access for people with limited means. Commonwealth capital subsidies will vary with the financial capacity of future residents rather than remain on fixed flat 2:1 ratio. Funding requirements to assist organisations in obtaining Commonwealth capital subsidies will be relaxed; there will be new provisions to ensure protection of residents' rights and adequate standards of care; and hostel planning arrangements will be integrated into long-term care planning.

22 October 1987: New places for aged accommodation approved for the next three years, will include an allocation of 816 places for specific groups such as Aboriginal people and ethnic communities which have special needs.

26 November 1987: Assessment teams will be appointed to approve admissions to nursing homes without referral to a Commonwealth Medical Officer. Ten teams will be appointed in a pilot program.

30 December 1987: The report, *Hostel Options — Flexible Responses to Individual Needs*, produced by the Department of Community Services and Health, in conjunction with the Office for the Aged, was released today. The report flows from the Governments' strategy for the care of frail aged people, announced at the time of the 1986–87 Budget.

Family Support Program

13 February 1987: The Western Australian Government has concluded a new Family Support Program with the Commonwealth. Details of the Program, the result of two years negotiation and planning, were announced by the Minister for Community Services and the State Community Services Minister. It rationalises existing services for families, services which are mostly community and church operated, designed to prevent family breakdown and assist in special circumstances or times of need. Western Australia is the first state to join with the Commonwealth in this new cost-shared program. This year $1.89 million — an increase of $256 000, is available to agencies in Western Australia.

Rural Information Service

12 May 1987: The Department of Community Services and the National Farmers' Federation will operate an information service for people in rural areas for a trial period of six weeks. Basic information about the Governments' welfare programs and services will be made available, as well as general advice on economic and social problems. The Minister for Social Security has offered the co-operation of his department in providing information; the Department of Community Services will provide the telephone operators; and the Farmers' Federation will pay the Telecom costs and publicise the trial service.

Administrative Change

July 1987: A new Community Services and Health portfolio has been created, which will have responsibility for community services, health programs and housing assistance programs as well as Aboriginal Affairs programs and Veterans Affairs programs.

Community Services — 1988

Compiled by Diana Encel
Social Policy Research Centre

Home and Community Care

15 January 1988: The Minister for Community Services and Health announced increased funding for community based care services, for the provision of new services as well as extensions for many existing programs, under the Home and Community Care (HACC) program.
4 March 1988: Commonwealth and State/Territory Ministers have established a working group of officials to review the operation of the HACC Agreements. The Minister for Housing and Aged Care announced the appointment of Dr Peter Saunders, Director of the Social Welfare Research Centre to chair the group.
25 May 1988: The Federal Government's unmatched funding to the States and Territories under the HACC program will be reduced by $3 million to $10 million in 1988–89, it was announced in the May Economic Statement. This will not affect the Government's commitment to index spending under the HACC Agreement by 20 per cent a year subject to matching by the States.
14 July 1988: The Minister for Community Services and Health and the NSW Minister for Family and Community Services announced additional funding for services for older veterans, veterans with disabilities and their carers, under the HACC program.
23 August 1988: Funds provided for HACC programs in the 1988–89 Budget have been increased by nearly $40 million to $209 008 million. This includes $10 million on an unmatched basis, to be used to fund projects designed to enhance the effectiveness of the program, through improved approaches to assessment, integrated service delivery and matching the types of services to the needs of a particular community, in geographic areas or target groups which have been underserviced in the past.

Children's Services

4 March 1988: The Minister for Community Services and Health announced details of grants under the Government's Children's Services Program, to child care support organisations to enable them to conduct management training for personnel of metropolitan and rural child care services.
18 March 1988: Grants have been announced to benefit children from non-English-speaking-backgrounds, and also isolated children.
28 April 1988: The Minister for Community Services and Health announced a grant to the Australian Early Childhood Association (AECA), to produce resource materials on child behaviour and development, relevant to children under 3 years of age. The materials, mostly in video form, will be distributed in all States.
5 May 1988: Funding from the Children's Services Program will be used to organise an inaugural conference of all Family Day Care Associations in Australia, to canvass the possibility of establishing a National Day Care Association which could represent the broad spectrum of the Family Day Care field in all States. Funding has been provided for the purchase of 10 training kits to be used by Family Day Care carers. The kit was developed in Tasmania and will be available in each State.
5 July 1988: Grants have been made to train staff and management committees of child care services, in the special needs of ethnic children and children with disabilities.
8 July 1988: The Minister of Community Services and Health announced details of funds allocated for Aboriginal Child Care Services.
23 August 1988: Details of funding of the Children's Services Program announced in the 1988–89 Budget include the provision of 30 000 extra child care places in four-year strategy. The new places are targeted particularly to children of low income families including sole parents and parents training for work. In addition the Government will work with the States and territories, local government and industry to establish 20 000 outside school hours places, 4000 centre based places, 4000 family day care places and 2000 occasional care places.

Supported Accommodation Assistance Program

4 March 1988: The Minister for Housing and Aged Care released the review, *Homes Away from Home*, commissioned in 1986. The review gives details of the operation of the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) to date, makes suggestions for improving the program and concludes that it is well targeted, has drawn together diverse Federal and State Programs, creating a nationally coordinated response to homelessness.
20 June 1988: Substantial increases in Commonwealth funding will be made to the States on a matched basis, for the provision of accommodation of the homeless, from 1 July 1988.
3 November 1988: The Government will increase support for homeless people by an extra $40 million

over the next three years. The new package will replace current arrangements with the States under the SAAP, which expire on 30 June 1989. The new scheme will include services such as access to training and employment assistance.

Disability Services

10 March 1988: Increased funding for services for people with disabilities was announced by the Minister for Community Services and Health. The funding will assist services to reshape their programs so as to comply with the objectives of the Government as expressed in the *Disability Services Act*. Funding is for 140 services which will receive an additional $4.11 million.

11 August 1988: A Government grant of $398 652 will fund the development of self-advocacy materials for people with intellectual disabilities, the Minister for Community Services and Health announced today. The grant is being provided over a two-year period to the National Self Advocacy Project.

23 August 1988: The 1988–89 Budget provides an 11 per cent increase on funds to be spent on the Disability Services Program, bringing funds to $165.2 million. For the first time, the Budget provided for indexation of grants to services funded under the Act. Details of grants in aid in the disability area were announced.

30 August 1988: People with disabilities will have improved access to the development and implementation of Government policy and programs under provisions announced by the Minister for Community Services and Health. The Commonwealth-funded Disability Council of Australia (DACA) is to be upgraded and State and Territory Disability Services Advisory Committees will be established to enhance consultation between the Government, service providers and consumers.

25 October 1988: Two 12-month courses in developmental disability will be funded by the Government, to boost on-the-job skills of 200 people now working with people who have disabilities, in non-government, Commonwealth-funded services. Priority will be given to people traditionally disadvantaged in their access to further education. The courses, announced by the Minister for Community Services and Health, will be conducted by the National Association on Intellectual Disability in co-operation with the Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education.

Aged Residential Care

8 April 1988: The Minister for Housing and Aged Care released the *Final Report of the Commonwealth/State Working Party on Nursing Home Standards*. The report is the basis for new nursing home funding arrangements now being developed. Unjustified variations in costs imposed on residents will be reduced; by 1991 no nursing home resident will have to pay more than 87.5 per cent of the pension. A small number of homes will be exempted from the new arrangements, for those choosing to pay more.

1 May 1988: National funding amounting to $81 million for a package of aged care services will include both the provision of new residential care facilities, and the upgrading and improvement of hostel and nursing home places. Facilities such as kitchens, laundries and fire safety features in the buildings are to be improved.

5 July 1988: A review panel to advise on nursing home standards is to be established in NSW — the first of a number of panels to be set up in all States and Territories. Announcing the establishment of the panel the Minister for Housing and Aged Care described its functions. It will provide an independent scrutiny of nursing homes, and it will be a means of review should nursing home proprietors believe either State or Commonwealth Government has treated them unfairly.

6 July 1988: Grants have been made to organisations in five States to provide training programs to assist residential care managers of aged care facilities to meet the Commonwealth standards for the quality of life of their residents. The training programs have been recommended following consideration of the findings of the *Nursing Homes and Hostels Quality of Care/Life Staff Training Consultancy Report* (the Bullock Report). The Minister for Housing and Aged Care announced that similar programs will be considered for Tasmania. A grant has also been announced to develop educational resource material for nursing home staff on the oral care needs of older people.

11 August 1988: A Commonwealth grant to the Ethnic Communities Council, provided under capital funding arrangements introduced last year to provide accommodation for people with little chance of access to aged care services, was announced by the Minister for Housing and Aged Care. It will be used to purchase a nursing home for frail aged people of non-English-speaking background.

15 August 1988: A number of nursing homes and hostels for aged people are to be upgraded as part of a $8.129 million national initiative to modernise facilities throughout Australia. The Minister for Housing and Aged Care announced the funding, under the Residential Care Program for Aged People.

23 August 1988: The 1988–89 Budget provides $19.6 million as first stage of a $131.6 million program to improve quality of life in nursing homes, and $31.3 million capital funding for nursing homes and hostels. The additional funds will provide extra care for each resident, 24-hour registered general nurse coverage, new equitable funding arrangements, training programs for nursing home staff, expansion of the Geriatric Assessment Program, expansion of the Special Services Program,

support for small nursing homes catering for the needs of special groups, improved respite care arrangements, restructuring and rationalisation of small homes, and an increase in the number of available hostel places. Funding to the Australian Pensioners' Federation has been increased to $120 000.

9 September 1988: The commissioning of a national study of staffing structures in nursing homes was announced today. It is one of the Government's initiatives to funding and standards for nursing home care. It will be complemented by a Management Support Consultancy to help industry adapt to the more flexible arrangements, and by an in-service training package to enhance and upgrade the skills of nursing and personal care staff in nursing homes.

23 December 1988: Grants under the *Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act*, totalling $101 734 200 will create 2614 new hostel places, 200 new nursing home places and renovate some 668 places in hostels and nursing homes. The package is the first to include grants under the new hostel funding arrangements for financially disadvantaged people.

Services for the Aged

5 May 1988: The Government has published *Who Pays? Financing Services for Older People*, a collection of papers resulting from a national seminar series and a conference held in 1986.

10 September 1988: The Minister for Housing and Aged Care announced details of a User Rights Consultancy commissioned by the Department of Community Services and Health, which will establish mechanisms for consumers to obtain advice on the best approaches for achieving consumer rights objectives in aged care. The consultancy is to report by February 1989.

20 September 1988: The Accommodation Rights Service (TARS) will receive a grant of $122 000 from the Government to help continue an advocacy service for elderly residents of NSW hostels and nursing homes.

Training

15 July 1988: The Minister for Employment, Education and Training and the Minister for Community Services and Health released two reports on the scope for improving training for workers in the human services sector. The first presents findings of a study by the National Institute for Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) into demand and supply for both paid and voluntary workers. The second was prepared by the Human Systems consulting group, and identifies areas of the human services sector which might benefit from a training advisory body. Consultations will be held with interested parties about the findings and possible future action.

Employment, Unemployment and Training — 1987

Compiled by Anthony King
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Community-based Programs

18 January 1987: The Minister for Employment and Industrial relations announced grants totalling $9 million for 67 locally-based vocational training projects and three information technology centres (ITECs) operating under the Community Training Program (CTP).

2 March 1987: Details of the Community Volunteer Program (CVP), which had been announced in the 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget, were provided by the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations. The CVP is designed to facilitate the voluntary participation of unemployed people, particularly the young unemployed, in community service activities. Implementation of the new program would entail the upgrading of most of the 21 Volunteer Referral Agencies established under the Volunteer Youth Program, and establishment of a further 15 Agencies. It was expected that between 15 000 and 20 000 unemployed people would participate each year in the CVP.

3 April 1987: Submissions were invited by the Government for small-scale Innovative Project Grants under the CVP. The grants, to amount to $500 000 in 1986–87, would fund innovative projects which offered worthwhile voluntary activities for young people.

30 June 1987: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced annual funding totalling $1.6 million under the CVP for the establishment of 37 new Volunteer Referral Agencies and upgrading of three of the existing Agencies.

15 September 1987: The intention to integrate the three community-based labour market programs into a single program was announced in 1987–88 Commonwealth Budget. The three programs affected are the Community Youth Support Scheme (CYSS), the CTP, and the CVP. In the meantime, these programs would continue to operate under the existing arrangements. Funding for these programs was increased in the Budget by $7.6 million to $59.6 million in 1987–88. The increased budget allocation included provision for the operation of the CVP over a full year and for the establishment

of seven further ITECs during 1987–88. On the other hand, funding for the Special Initiatives Grants element of CYSS would be discontinued.

16 October 1987: The Minister for Employment Services and Youth Affairs launched the consultations on the integration of community-based programs.

6 November 1987: Allocations for CYSS projects for the 1987–88 funding year were announced by the Minister for Employment Services and Youth Affairs. Of the 353 existing projects, 297 will be continued at their current funding classification.

Employment and Training for Women

1 February 1987: Australian companies employing more than 1000 people were required to start developing and implementing affirmative action programs from this date. This was a requirement of the legislation which came into effect in October 1986. Other companies with over 500 employees would be required to commence implementation by 1 February 1988, and those with 100 to 499 employees by 1 February 1989.

19 March 1987: The *Equal Employment Opportunity (Commonwealth Authorities) Bill* was introduced into the House of Representatives. The Bill provided for the same equal opportunity provisions to apply in Commonwealth statutory authorities as applied already in the Commonwealth Public Service, institutions of higher education and the private sector. The legislation was passed by Parliament on 5 May.

31 March 1987: The Prime Minister made a ministerial statement in the House of Representatives when presenting the report of consultations on the National Agenda for Women. The report, *Setting the Agenda*, was based on consultations undertaken with women during 1986.

Commonwealth Employment Service

6 March 1987: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced that 63 new Youth Access Centres (YAC) would be progressively established during 1987 in offices of the Commonwealth Employment Service. The decision followed a favourable response to the 37 YACs which had been set up on a trial basis in 1986.

29 June 1987: The locations and other details of the additional YACs to be established were announced by the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations.

Adult Training and Retraining

13 May 1987: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced that a special provision of $2 million in 1987–88 under the Adult Training Program (ATP) would be one element of the increased funding for training announced in the May Economic Statement. The special provision would provide an additional 660 training places for sole parents and older single women. Social Security entitlements for these groups were curtailed in the Statement.

15 September 1987: The 1987–88 Commonwealth Budget provided $29.7 million for the ATP.

Community Employment Program

13 May 1987: Abolition of the Community Employment Program (CEP) was announced in the May Economic Statement. No new CEP projects would be approved beyond 30 June 1987, though $100 million would be available for the completion of those projects approved before that date. The announcement countered the indication in the 1986–87 Commonwealth budget of CEP funding until June 1989.

Extent and Direction of Labour Market Programs

12 March 1987: The *Report of Commonwealth/State Working Group on Skills Shortages and Skills Formation* was released. The Working Group had been established in April 1986 to report on possible measures to upgrade the level of skills in Australia and address skill shortages. The Report identified increased levels of training investment by the private sector as the key to improving the skills base in Australia. The Report suggested the tripartite industry training councils should play a central role in encouraging a greater national training effort, and supported the Australian Traineeship System. Commonwealth and State Labour Ministers have endorsed the central findings of the Report.

24 April 1987: the Economic Planning and Advisory Council was addressed on the subject of 'labour shortages and government responses' by the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations.

13 May 1987: Measures announced in the May Economic Statement amounted to a further redirection of labour market policy away from job creation and work experience programs and towards training programs. The measures included abolition of the Community Employment Program and a 50 per cent increase in funds for training programs in 1987–88.

23 June 1987: Further details of the increase in funding for training programs, foreshadowed in the May Economic Statement, were provided in the speech by the Prime Minister upon his opening of the ALP election campaign. A new skills training program would be introduced; the Adult Training Program would be restructured and expanded; and an expansion of youth vocational training would include the introduction of a new youth training

program for 15–20 year-olds who have been unemployed for at least six months.

15 September 1987: Figures presented in the 1987–88 Commonwealth Budget showed expenditure on employment and training programs in 1986–87 amounting to $701 million including: $196 million for the CEP; $124 million under Jobstart; $115 million for trade training; $71 million for Aboriginal employment and training; $64 million for various training programs and $52 million for community-based youth programs. The 1987–88 Commonwealth Budget provided $671 million for employment and training programs. The Budget allocations continued the shift towards training programs with a 40 per cent increase in the allocations for these programs, partly offsetting a $114 million reduction in the funding for the CEP and Jobstart. Reflecting the increased emphasis on training, the Budget included a specific paper on the issues: Commonwealth Budget Paper no.9, *Skills for Australia*. The policy objectives set out in this paper included: increased participation in education and training and expansion of national training capacity; improvement in the quality and flexibility of education and training systems; improvement in the distribution and balance of national education and training; raising of the level of private sector investment in training and skills formation; improvement in the employment and training opportunities available to the unemployed and otherwise disadvantaged groups; increase in the productivity of education and training resources and evaluation of their outputs.

Training Allowances

13 May 1987: A special allocation of $500 000 in 1987–88 for sole parents participating in formal training programs was announced in the May Economic Statement. The allocation would assist with the additional costs of child-care where Children's Services Program places are not available.

15 September 1987: A number of changes to the Formal Training Allowance (FTA) were announced in the 1987–88 Commonwealth Budget. In order to remove financial disincentives to students continuing their education, FTA would not be payable from 1988 to new trainees under the age of 21. It was also announced that a standard rate for FTA of $30 per week would apply from 1988, thus removing the higher rates currently payable to trainees aged 25 years or over.

Wage Subsidy Programs

13 May 1987: A $28 million reduction in the forward estimates allocation for Jobstart was announced in the May Economic Statement. The reduction would include $9 million attributable to the withdrawal of wage subsidy assistance to Commonwealth departments and statutory authorities under the Commonwealth Work Experience Program.

15 September 1987: The 1987–88 Commonwealth Budget allocated $100 million to Jobstart, compared to expenditure of $124 million in 1986–87.

Industry and Regional Employment Assistance

5 June 1987: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced details of the labour adjustment elements of an assistance package for workers adversely affected by the restructuring of the textiles, clothing and footwear industry. Measures under the Package would be introduced on 1 January 1988 to allow for any industry contraction prior to commencement of the seven-year textiles, clothing and footwear industry plan on 1 March 1989.

Departmental Responsibilities

14 July 1987: The Prime Minister announced major changes in Commonwealth Government administration including a reduction in the number of departments and establishment of a two-tier ministerial structure. The reorganisation, which took effect from 24 July 1987, included the creation of a new Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) through amalgamation of the former Department of Education and elements of the former Department of Employment and Industrial Relations. DEET would also include parts of the Department of Science and also the Office of Youth Affairs from the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. The Hon. J. S. Dawkins was appointed Minister for Employment, Education and Training, and the Hon. A. C. Holding was appointed to the non-Cabinet position of Minister for Employment and Youth Affairs.

Australian Traineeship System

15 September 1987: The 1987–88 Commonwealth Budget provided a substantial increase in funding for the Australian Traineeship System (ATS) with an allocation of $44.6 million compared to expenditure of $13.6 m in 1986–87. With 7085 trainees commencing under the ATS in 1986–87, it was acknowledged that-take-up had been slower than expected. A further 13 000 commencements were expected in 1987–88.

Employment and Training for Aboriginals

15 September 1987: The 1987–88 Commonwealth Budget provided for a 14 per cent increase in funds

for Aboriginal employment and training programs. The increase included an additional $1.6m for the Enterprise Employment Assistance Program and $1m for establishment of an Aboriginal Enterprise Incentive Scheme.

Job Search Training Program

15 September 1987: Establishment of a Job Search Training Program was announced in the 1987–88 Commonwealth Budget with an initial allocation of $1.6 million. Under the program, job-seekers will be provided with the opportunity to receive a short course of structured training in job search skills.

Self-employment Initiatives

15 September 1987: The 1987–88 Commonwealth Budget provided $3.5m for establishment of the New Enterprise Initiative Scheme (NEIS) on a continuing basis. The allocation follows consideration of an initial evaluation report on the pilot NEIS.

Skills Training

15 September 1987: The 1987–88 Commonwealth Budget included the announcement of a Skills Training Program to encompass the functions previously carried out under Industry Training Services including support for Innovative Training Projects. The 1987–88 Budget allocation of $22.6m for these functions was a $6.2m increase over the 1986–87 level.

Trade Training

15 September 1987: The 1987–88 Commonwealth Budget provided for a 12.3 per cent increase in expenditure on trade training programs to $129.3m with major revisions to the forms of assistance provided. The current system of rebates under the Commonwealth Rebate for Apprentice Full-Time Training Scheme would be phased out from 1 January 1988. The new system would entail two payments of up to $1500 to employers; one made at commencement of an apprenticeship and the second upon completion. The new system of payments is designed to focus attention on completion and competency outcomes, facilitate reform of the apprenticeship system, and simplify claiming processes for employers.

Youth Training

15 September 1987: The 1987–88 Commonwealth Budget provided for the introduction of a new Youth Training Program which would replace the Participation and Equity Program, from 1 January 1988, and those elements of the Adult Training and Experimental Training Programs directed at 15–20 year-olds. The Program will provide vocational training for long-term unemployed and other disadvantaged 15–20 year-olds. The Budget allocation of $30.7m for 1987–88 compared to a corresponding figure of $12.3m in 1986–87.

Advisory Bodies

15 October 1987: A new advisory structure for the Employment, Education and Training portfolio was announced by the Minister. The principal element in the new structure would be a statutory body to be known as the National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET). The new structure would absorb the functions of a number of exciting advisory bodies including the Australian Council for Employment and Training.

23 December 1987: The Minister for Employment, Education and Training announced further details of NBEET including acting appointments to an interim Board and supporting Councils pending legislation to create the statutory authority. Four Councils will support the Board: the Schools Council; the Higher Education Council; the Employment and Skills Formation Council, and the Australian Research Council.

Local Employment Initiatives

21 December 1987: *Local Employment Initiatives: A Strategic Approach*, a report prepared by the National Advisory Group on Local Employment Initiatives, was released by the Minister for Employment Services and Youth Affairs. The report recommended the establishment of around 20 small organisations in selected regions to foster local employment initiatives, supported by a small national Local Employment Initiatives Corporation to provide training and advice.

Skilled Immigration

31 December 1987: The fourth annual report of the Occupational Share System for Skilled Migration was released by the Minister for Employment, Education and Training. During 1987–88, up to 3300 skilled workers in 23 occupations would be granted entry to Australia under the System.

Employment, Unemployment and Training — 1988

Compiled by Anthony King
National Institute of Economic and Industry Research

Ministerial Responsibilities

January 1988: The second-tier ministerial responsibility under the Department of Employment, Education and Training was changed. The position of Minister for Employment and Youth Affairs was replaced with the position of Minister for Employment and Education Services. The Hon. P. Duncan M.P. was appointed to the new position.

Community-based Programs

14 January 1988: The Minister for Employment and Youth Affairs announced grants totalling $7.9 million for 60 locally-based projects under the Community Training Program (CTP). Further grants announced on 4 February and 10 March, amounting to $4.1 million, would see the number of Information Technology Centres rise to eleven.
3 March 1988: The Minister for Employment and Education Services reported on the consultations undertaken on integration of the Community Youth Support Scheme (CYSS), the CTP, and the Community Volunteer Program (CVP). The Minister foreshadowed an announcement of details of the new program in the May Economic Statement and commencement of the program on 1 November 1988.
15 June 1988: Details of the new integrated community-based program, to be known as Skillshare, were announced by the Minister for Employment and Education Services. The emphasis of Skillshare would be on local communities sharing their skills and resources with the unemployed. The new program would begin operation on 1 January 1989.
23 August 1988: The 1988–89 Commonwealth Budget provided $57.7m for Skillshare functions compared to $52.0m in 1987–88. Until 31 December 1988, grants will continue to be provided to: 347 projects under CYSS; 65 community-based projects and 11 Information Technology Centres (ITECs) under CTP; and 64 voluntary agencies under CVP. Under Skillshare, from 1 January 1989, grants will be provided to non-profit community organisations to provide a range of assistance to the disadvantaged unemployed, with an emphasis on youth. All projects will have to involve structured skills training. Project sponsors will be expected to generate a minimum community contribution of 15 per cent of project costs in the first year of operation, rising to 20 per cent in the following year. ITECs will continue to require a community contribution equal to the value of the Commonwealth grant.
28 November 1988: Grants totalling $52 million for 358 projects under Skillshare in 1989 were announced by the Minister for Employment and Education Services.

Local Employment Initiatives

5 February 1988: A national program of consultation on Local Employment Initiatives was launched by the Acting Minister for Employment, Education and Training.

Australian Traineeship System

1 March 1988: Preliminary results of an attitude survey of trainees and employers participating in the Australian Traineeship System (ATS) were released by the Minister for Employment, Education and Training.
23 August 1988: A substantial increase in the funding for the ATS, from $28.8m in 1987–88 to $45.9m in 1988–89, was included in the 1988–89 Commonwealth Budget. It was expected that 15 000 people would commence ATS traineeships in 1988–89, compared to 10 166 in 1987–88.

Social Justice Strategies

2 May 1988: *Towards a Fairer Australia*, a report detailing the Government's actions in the area of social justice and the agenda for further reform, was released by the Prime Minister. The report included sections on employment and on education and training.
29 October 1988: The Minister for Employment and Education Services announced that a Youth Social Justice Strategy was being developed in conjunction with the Minister for Social Security. The key areas identified as relevant to the position of disadvantaged young people included; access to mainstream education and training opportunities, and income support arrangements and related labour market assistance for the unemployed.

Industry Training

25 May 1988: Release of *A Changing Workforce*, in conjunction with the May Economic Statement, set out requirements to meet the objectives specified in

the 1987–88 Budget paper *Skills for Australia*. These requirements included increased funding for training and a reform of current training arrangements and institutions to make them more responsive to changing demands. Since industry was seen as the major beneficiary of better training, the report argued that industry should take a greater role and make a larger contribution to training workers.

6 December 1988: A major discussion paper on industry training was released by the Minister for Employment, Education and Training. The discussion paper, *Industry Training in Australia: The Need for Change*, highlights the urgent need for industry to increase its contribution to training and canvasses options, including an external and internal levy, to meet the costs of an expanded training system. A report on the response to the discussion paper would be prepared in May 1989.

Employment and Training for Aboriginals

25 May 1988: The decision to establish an Aboriginal Economic Development Corporation was announced in the May Economic Statement. The Corporation will undertake commercial activities of benefit to Aboriginals with the aim of furthering Aboriginal participation in enterprises operating on Aboriginal land or with significant impact on Aboriginal communities.

23 August 1988: The 1988–89 Commonwealth Budget provided $79.7m for Aboriginal employment and training. The allocation included a further shift in emphasis away from work-experience positions and towards provisions of jobs and training positions in the private sector.

Advisory Structures

26 May 1988: The formation of a Women's Employment, Education and Training Advisory Group was announced by the Minister for Employment, Education and Training. The Group will be drawn from women appointed to the National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET) and its Councils.

1 July 1988: The legislation establishing NBEET and its four Councils came into effect with proclamation of the *Employment, Education and Training Act 1988*.

13 July 1988: Membership of NBEET and the four associated Councils was announced by the Minister for Employment, Education and Training. Existing advisory mechanisms for Aboriginal employment education and training would be retained pending establishment of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission which was announced in the May Economic Statement.

Trade Training

29 May 1988: The Minister for Employment, Education and Training released two reports on aspects of trade training: *Women in Apprenticeship* and *Standards-Based Trade Training*.

23 August 1988: The 1988–89 Commonwealth Budget provided $139.7m for trade training, a 17 per cent increase on the 1987–88 level. While the number of apprentices to be assisted would increase in 1988–89, a significant part of the increased allocation is a one-off affect of the change in the system of payments announced last year.

Adult and Youth Training

23 August 1988: Amalgamation of the Adult Training Program and the Youth Training Program into a new JOBTRAIN program was announced in the 1988–89 Commonwealth Budget. The 1988–89 allocation of $86.7m represented a 57 per cent increase on 1987–88 expenditure. This increase reflected the additional places to be made available under NEW-START and JET as well as the increased allocation announced in the 1987 May Economic Statement.

Extent and Direction of Labour Market Programs

23 August 1988: The 1988–89 Commonwealth Budget provided $614m for employment and training programs. The allocation included a 20 per cent increase in real terms in funding for training programs, continuing the shift in emphasis since 1985–86. A particular feature of the Budget was the increased allocation targetted at the long-term unemployed and sole parents under the NEW-START and JET programs. Major elements of the allocation included: $140m for Trade Training; $97m for Jobstart; $91m for JOBTRAIN (an amalgamation of the Adult and Youth Training Programs); $85m for Aboriginal employment and training; $70m for Skillshare (the integrated community-based program); $48m for industry and regional employment assistance; $46m for the Australian Traineeship System; and $26m for skills training.

Industry and Regional Employment Assistance

23 August 1988: It was announced in the 1988–89 Commonwealth Budget that labour adjustment programs administered by the Department of Employment, Education and Training would be restructured into an integrated program and administered by the newly established Office of

Labour Market Adjustment. The Office would also monitor structural change and provide assistance packages to displaced workers where appropriate, including the standard elements of existing packages: wage subsidies, training and relocation assistance, and re-employment committees. The special provisions of existing packages would remain unaffected. The existing programs include: Heavy Engineering; Textiles, Clothing and Footwear; Coal Mining; Christmas Island; Steel Regions; and Labour Adjustment Training Arrangements.

NEW-START and JET

23 August 1988: The 1988–89 Commonwealth Budget included announcement of two initiatives designed to provide increased assistance to the long-term unemployed and sole parent pensioners. The two initiatives, termed NEW-START and Jobs, Education and Training (JET) each comprise a package of measures relating to a number of portfolios. The key labour market program element of the packages will be an increase in the places available for the long-term unemployed and sole parents in programs such as Jobstart, Jobtrain, Skillshare and Job Search Training. In a full-year, this increase will amount to 25 000 additional places for the long-term unemployed and 12 000 additional places for sole parents.

Self-employment Initiatives

23 August 1988: The provision of $7.3m for the New Enterprise Initiative Scheme in the 1988–89 Commonwealth Budget included extension of the scheme to allow for non-government and private sector organisations to contribute to providing loans and grants.

Skills Training

23 August 1988: The 1988–89 Commonwealth Budget allocated $25.6m for Skills Training.

Wage Subsidy Programs

23 August 1988: The 1988–89 Commonwealth Budget provided $97m for Jobstart, a $11.5m reduction from expenditure in 1987–88. As a result of the timing of commencements, however, the number of Jobstart participants in 1988–89 was expected to exceed the 1987–88 number. Increased priority in Jobstart in 1988–89 will be given to the long-term unemployed and sole parents as a result of the NEW-START and JET initiatives.

Employment and Training for Women

18 November 1988: The *Australian Women's Employment Strategy* was released by the Minister for Employment and Education Services. The Strategy, which sets out eight common goals for working women or women who want to work, had also been endorsed by the State and Territory Governments. The Strategic goals include: reducing gender segregation in the workplace, improving conditions for workers with family responsibilities, improving training opportunities for women as part of industry restructuring, and promoting pay equity.

Family Law — 1987

Compiled by Margaret Harrison
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Child Abduction

January 1987: The Family Law (Child Abduction Convention) Regulations came into operation. These implement the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, which aims to secure the prompt return of children wrongfully removed to or kept in any State which is a party to the Convention. The Convention also ensures that custody and access rights under the law of one State are respected in other States.

Contempt

June 1987: The Australian Law Reform Commission report on Contempt was tabled in Parliament. The Report includes the following recommendations relevant to family law: that the existing family law contempt provisions be abolished and replaced by statutory offences with specified maximum penalties; that the breach of a non-molestation order be an offence, and there should be restricted excusable circumstances for the breach of an access order by a custodial parent; that attachment of the power of arrest be automatic where the prerequisites are satisfied. In addition, the report recommends that wilful breach of an injunction restraining assault, harassment or entering specified premises or areas should be a criminal offence, where the respondent was present when the order was made, or was personally served with a copy of the order before the breach occurred. In the case of access default, the court should *always* determine whether it has occurred and was accompanied by the relevant mental element. Even where this is the case the defence of justification should be available where the custodial parent honestly and reasonably believed that the relevant denial of access was necessary to protect the health or safety of the child, or there was no deprivation of access for longer than was reasonably necessary to achieve this purpose. In imposing sanctions in these circumstance the law should specify the following as being relevant: the desirability, in the interests of the child, of the child's maintaining contact with each parent; the child's reactions to access and to the prospect of access; the effect on the child of the imposition of any sanction considered by the court. In the case of maintenance default the court should consider imprisonment only where there have been non-compliance proceedings, and wherever possible periodic detention and community service orders should be used in preference to imprisonment.

Matrimonial Property

September 1987: The Australian Law Reform Commission Report on Matrimonial Property was tabled in Parliament. The recommendations contained in the Report included a rejection of the introduction of a fixed entitlement system. Such a system was not supported, as it excludes consideration of the economic effects of the marriage breakdown on the spouses and their children. The report recommends a more structured discretion than is currently provided in the *Family Law Act*. This discretion would start from a basic rule of equal sharing in the value of the property, which would continue to include all the property of the spouses. The equal sharing starting point would replace the present emphasis on the assessment of the contributions made by each spouse. Equal sharing would be departed from in certain circumstances, which the court would be required to specify. These include: substantially greater contribution to the marriage by one spouse, post-separation actions of the spouses in relation to property or child care, that one spouse has the benefit of financial resources built up during the marriage, and/or one spouse brought property into the marriage or acquired it by gift, inheritance, compensation or damages. There is also a recommendation that there be a systematic treatment of superannuation in the *Family Law Act*, and that agreements relating to property and maintenance rights in the event of marriage breakdown should be available to parties. The report also includes discussion of bankruptcy, rights of third parties and spousal and child maintenance.

Access

October 1987: The Attorney-General tabled the report of the Family Law Council, *Access — Some Options for Reform*. The terms of reference of the committee which prepared the report included an examination of the objectives of access, identification of the problem areas and how they might be overcome, and the desirability of making specific statutory provision for a scheme of joint custody or joint parenting. The report made a number of recommendations. These included the amendment to the *Family Law Act* so that provisions relating to access are separated from those dealing with custody and guardianship, and so that custody and access agreements might be registered without the need for any proceedings to be instituted. The report did not recommend that Australia should adopt a legal preference or preferred approach to joint custody, but suggested that registration of agreements would encourage a co-operative approach to parenting after separation.

Family Law — 1988

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Australian Institute of Family Studies

Family Law Act Amendments

April 1988: The *Family Law Amendment Act* amendments came into operation. These implement the referral of powers over children in the four states which have passed the necessary legislation. In those States provisions relating to custody, guardianship, access and maintenance of children will apply to *all* children. The amendments also alter the criteria for the assessment of child maintenance, giving it top priority and abolishing the provision that Social Security entitlements may be taken into account when maintenance is considered. There are new provisions relating to paternity and the maintenance obligations of step-parents, and parents may register child agreements which have the force of a court order on registration.

April and July 1988: *Family Court (Additional Jurisdiction and Exercise of Powers) Act* (most provisions came into operation on receiving the Royal Assent on 5 April 1988 and the balance on 1 July 1988). The Act expands the jurisdiction of courts of Summary Jurisdiction by allowing prescribed courts to hear applications for dissolution. In addition, the monetary limit for courts of Summary Jurisdiction in property matters is increased from $1000 to $20 000. The Act also enables the Family Court to hear proceedings under the *Administrative Decisions (Judicial Review) Act*, the *Bankruptcy Act*, consumer protection provisions of the *Trade Practices Act* and Taxation appeals which are transferred from the Federal Court. Proceedings may be transferred at the request of the parties or by the Federal Court itself. The Act also creates the position of Judicial Registrar.

Arbitration in Family Law

June 1988: The Family Law Council report, *Arbitration in Family Law* was tabled in Parliament. The report recommends a system of court-annexed arbitration, which would be available if agreement had not been reached after mediation or conciliation had been attempted. Consensual and compulsory arbitration would be available in specified circumstances. An automatic re-hearing before a judge would be available, but cost disincentives would be built-in to avoid frivolous applications at this level. The report includes discussion of which family law proceedings are suitable for arbitration, the qualifications and accreditation appropriate for arbitrators, the role of legal aid, and the role of the courts in controlling the arbitration process.

Child Sexual Abuse

December 1988: The Minister for Justice tabled the Family Law Council *Child Sexual Abuse* report in the Senate. The report examines the objectives of the law in sexual abuse cases, provides a definition and looks at the problems associated with jurisdictional divisions, overlap and duplication between State and Federal agencies. Although primarily concerned with the management of child sexual abuse cases in the Family Court, the report discusses the use and reliability of children's evidence, contains a literature review and refers to the knowledge gaps in the area. The 23 recommendations in the report cover such difficult issues as interim access where sexual abuse has been alleged, the use of separate representatives, and restriction of the use of medical and other experts. The report recommends the establishment of a Children's Legal Service to liaise with different departments, prevent cases becoming 'lost', provide continuity and protect children from a multiplicity of proceedings and investigations. Another recommendation involves the empowerment of child welfare courts with Family Court jurisdiction in certain circumstances.

Child Maintenance

May 1988: The report of the Child Support Consultative Group, *Child Support — Formula for Australia*, was tabled in Parliament. The report proposed that child maintenance be assessed administratively by a formula based on the income of the non-custodial parent (and, where appropriate, the custodial parent) and the number of eligible children. There would be a self support amount of income to cover basic personal living expenses which the formula would not apply to, and this amount would be increased where the non-custodial parent had additional children. Variations to the basic formula would apply where one or more children were living with different parents, where there was joint custody or substantial access. The report also includes recommendations about periodic updating of obligations, the treatment of lump sum maintenance payments, the provision of appeals and the role of private agreements under administrative assessment.

June 1988: The *Child Support Act* came into operation. The Act establishes the Child Support Agency within the Australian Taxation Office, and enables maintenance payable according to a court order or agreement to be collected by deduction from salary or wages of the payer. Where this is inappropriate payments are to be made directly to the Child Support Agency. The money so collected is paid on a

monthly basis to custodial parents by the Department of Social Security. The system operates immediately for parents separating after June 1 1988, or (where parents have not lived together) where a child is born on or after that date. Non-pensioners may opt out, but pensioners are required to both seek maintenance from the other parent and have payments made via the Agency. Sole parent pensioners whose maintenance was being collected by a State or court-based agency will have their maintenance automatically collected by the Child Support Agency.

June 1988: Amendments to the *Social Security Act* were passed to provide for a separate income test on maintenance income for pensioners and beneficiaries. The amount is $15 per week for the first child, and $5 per week for each subsequent child.

Cross-Vesting

1 July 1988: The *Jurisdiction of Courts (Cross-vesting) Act 1987* came into operation. This Act aims to overcome jurisdictional problems by vesting Federal courts with State jurisdiction, and vice versa, so that no court action will fail through lack of jurisdiction. Proceedings may be transferred between courts and those begun in an inappropriate court should be transferred. Thus the cross-vesting proceedings will be applied only in exceptional cases, where there are jurisdictional uncertainties and there is a real need to have proceedings heard together. (The States passed similar Acts in 1988 to effect the cross-vesting provisions at the State level).

Immigration — 1987

Compiled by Anthony King
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Migrant Services

11 January 1987: Funding of 81 grants for migrant welfare services, totalling $2.4m, under the Grant-in-Aid Scheme was announced by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.

18 January 1987: The Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs reported on progress with the Government's review of migrant and multicultural programs and services, following completion of the first stage of the review in November 1986. The final stage will see consultation with other areas of government, the non-government sector and recipients of government services, and a key role to be played by the new Office of Multicultural Affairs and its Advisory Council.

June 1987: Migrant welfare grants for 46 ethnic and community organisations, under the Migrant Project Subsidy Scheme, were announced by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.

15 September 1987: The 1987–88 Commonwealth Budget allocated $58.8m to the Adult Migrant Education Program (AMEP), a 17 per cent increase on expenditure in the previous financial year. The increase represented the additional cost of tuition provided by State services and the implementation of recommendations of the Campbell Report which had reviewed the AMEP. Changes in the Government's strategy for providing accommodation for newly-arrived migrants in need were also included in the Budget announcements. Following the success of the Pennington Hostel in Adelaide, there would be a change in emphasis from hostel accommodation to self-contained accommodation. The new strategy would involve: closure and sale of migrant hostels in Perth and Brisbane; the disposal of unused hostels in Sydney and Melbourne, and reduction in the remaining hostel accommodation in those cities, and; the housing of new arrivals in self-contained accommodation.

Migration Act

22 January 1987: A booklet canvassing options for reform of the *Migration Act 1958* was released by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. The options concern in particular those sections of the

Act relating to decision-making and review, and release of the booklet preceded a program of consultations on reform of the legislation.

Changes to Ministry

16 February 1987: The Hon. Michael Young succeeded the Hon. Chris Hurford as Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. Mr Clyde Holding was appointed Minister Assisting the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.
July 1987: The Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs was formed when the Office of Local Government joined the former Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.

Advisory Council on Multicultural Affairs

13 March 1987: Establishment of the Advisory Council on Multicultural Affairs, and appointments to senior positions on the Council, were announced by the Prime Minister. The Council will provide advice to the Prime Minister and the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs and will be supported by the Office of Multicultural Affairs which is being established within the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. Senior appointments to the Office were also announced.
9 April 1987: The Prime Minister announced that a national agenda for a multicultural Australia would be prepared by the Advisory Council on Multicultural Affairs. The agenda would comprise a program of specific priorities over a broad range of areas and would be developed on the basis of consultation with community interests.

Immigration Program

26 March 1987: The appropriate level for Australia's immigration intake for the coming year was one of the major issues discussed at the annual conference of Commonwealth and State and Territory Ministers for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, held in Wellington, New Zealand. A modest increase in Australia's 1987–88 immigration intake was foreshadowed by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.
11 June 1987: Details of the 1987–88 immigration program were announced by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. Australia plans to accept 120 000 migrants in 1987–88, a 5000 increase on the revised planned total for 1986–87. The planned total would include: 33 000 places under Family Migration, 20 500 under Skilled Labour and Business Migration (including 8000 under the Occupational Shares System and 3500 under the Business Migration Program), 42 000 under Independent and Concessional Migration, 12 000 under the Refugee and Special Humanitarian Programs, 1500 under special eligibility, and 11 000 under Change of Status.
14 June 1987: A number of measures to reduce delays in immigration appeals were announced by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. The measures include expansion of Immigration Review Panel membership and increased backup from the Department. Further measures were announced in the 1987–88 Commonwealth Budget.
15 September 1987: Details of increases in fees for immigration services were announced in the 1987–88 Commonwealth Budget. These included an increase in the fee for application for migration to Australia from $40 to $60 on lodgement, and from $110 to $165 on final processing. The increases would take effect from 1 October 1987. The Budget also provided additional funding for promotion of the Business Migration Program.
5 November 1987: Introduction of a new system of accreditation under the Business Migration Program was announced by the Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs. This would provide business migration applicants with the option of having their applications largely processed by accredited business consultants or private agents.

Economic Impact of Immigration

21 April 1987: A conference on the economics of immigration, jointly sponsored by the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs and the Australian National University, was held in Canberra. The conference was addressed by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.

Overall Immigration Policy

18 June 1987: The ALP immigration and ethnic affairs policy platform for the forthcoming federal election was launched by the Prime Minister. Six areas of proposed activity were identified as key elements of the platform. These were: implementation of the national policy on languages; production of a Green Paper on immigration, examining all aspects of immigration policy; extension of the strategy of access and equity with regard to government programs and services; major roles for the Advisory Council on Multicultural Affairs and the Office of Multicultural Affairs; reduction of delays in the immigration appeals system; and priority to family reunion within a steadily expanding immigration program.
18 September 1987: The terms of reference and membership of the Committee to Advise on Australia's Immigration Policies were announced by the Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs. The Committee, which had been foreshadowed in the ALP election platform, would

prepare a Green Paper on Immigration and report in March 1988. Matters to be addressed by the Committee would include: the relationship between immigration and the economy, including the effects on the labour market and economic development; the relationship between immigration and Australia's social and cultural development as a multicultural society; the relationship between immigration and key population issues; the overall capacity of Australia to receive significant immigration intakes, and; the relationship between immigration policies and the administrative and legislative processes involved. The Committee would be chaired by Dr Stephen Fitzgerald.

Occupational Shares System

8 November 1987: The occupational shares for skilled migration in 1987–88 under the Occupational Shares System were announced. The 1987–88 Schedule has places for 3300 workers in 23 occupations, a decline of 650 places from the 1986–87 program.

Population Trends and Prospects

19 November 1987: *Australia's Population Trends and Prospects 1987*, a report prepared by the Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs, was tabled in Parliament by the Minister. The Minister cited the report as demonstrating the crucial role that immigration had to play in the future of the Australian economy.

National Policy on Languages

4 May 1987: A major government report recommending a national language policy for Australia was tabled in Parliament by the Minister for Education. the report, *National Policy on Languages*, proposed that the Commonwealth co-ordinate language use and learning according to four principles: competence in English, maintenance and development of languages other than English, provision of services in languages other than English, and opportunities for learning second languages.

18 June 1987: The Prime Minister and Minister for Education announced a commitment to implement a national languages policy and foreshadowed an allocation of $15m in the 1987–88 Commonwealth Budget for the first stages of the policy.

15 December 1987: Composition of an Advisory Council and details of funding for the National Policy on Languages were announced by the Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs and the Minister for Employment Services and Youth Affairs. The 1987–88 Commonwealth Budget had provided $15m for implementation of the National Policy with a further $28m foreshadowed for 1988–89. The National Policy would have six major elements, all of which would be in place by early 1988. The six elements are: English as a Second Language, Australian Second Language Learning Program, Adult Literacy Action Campaign, Asian Studies, Multicultural and Cross-cultural Supplementation Programs and, National Aboriginal Languages Project.

Immigration — 1988

Compiled by Anthony King
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Migrant services

6 January 1988: A number of grants for migrant welfare services under the Grant-in-Aid Scheme were announced by the Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs.
25 February 1988: The Access and Equity Plan for the Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs was released by the Minister. The Plan set out a three-year strategy which aims to ensure that all Australian residents, especially those from non-English-speaking backgrounds, are aware of their rights of access to the Department's services and programs, and are able to make full use of them.
25 May 1988: A decision to decentralise the Australian operations of DILGEA was announced in the May Economic Statement. The program, over four years, will involve moving service delivery points into suburban areas with the establishment of new offices in Sydney and Melbourne to improve clients' access.
3 July 1988: Migrant welfare grants for 52 ethnic and community organisations, under the Migrant Project Subsidy Scheme, were announced by the Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs.
8 December 1988: Rationalisation of immigration settlement programs to concentrate on the immediate needs of newly arrived migrants was announced by the Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs as part of the Government's response to the Fitzgerald Report. The Department would concentrate on the language and communications needs of new arrivals and phase out the provision and funding of services such as health, welfare and housing which are available from other government agencies.

Overall Immigration Policy

15 January 1988: This day was the deadline for public submissions to the Committee to Advise on Australia's Immigration Policies. The deadline had been extended from the previously announced date of 18 December 1987 in response to the high level of public interest. The process of consultation undertaken by the Committee had included wide distribution of a booklet entitled 'Understanding Immigration'.
3 June 1988: The Report of the Committee to Advise on Australia's Immigration Policies, 'Immigration — A Commitment to Australia' (the Fitzgerald Report), was tabled in Parliament by the Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs. The Government response would be announced later in the year. A period of three months would be set aside for public evaluation and comment before the Government considered the report in detail and took decisions on future directions for immigration policy.
8 December 1988: A major package of reforms to immigration legislation and policy, the Government's response to the Fitzgerald Report, was announced by the Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs. Major elements of the reform package included: a reaffirmation of the Government's commitment to a non-discriminatory approach to migrant selection on a global basis; division of the immigration program into three main streams — family migration, skilled migration and humanitarian migration — and a number of changes to selection processes; establishment of a Bureau of Immigration Research; reform of the management of immigration programs to ensure they do not exceed targets, and; changes in the machinery of decision-making to ensure that administration is demonstrably open, consistent and fair. Further detail on the reforms is included elsewhere in this section.

Changes to Ministry

8 February 1988: The Hon. Michael Young resigned as Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs. He was succeeded by the Hon. Clyde Holding.
2 September 1988: Senator Robert Ray succeeded the Hon. Clyde Holding as Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs.

Immigration Program

1 March 1988: Introduction of a new Skills Transfer Scheme, to facilitate the short-term entry to Australia of skilled people from overseas, was announced by the Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs. The Scheme was designed to provide a flexible means of assistance for overeseas companies operating in Australia and for Australian companies which need to bring in specialist staff for limited periods.
6 April 1988: The Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs announced that the 1987–88 immigration intake would be increased to 132 000 places. This would be 12 000 places above the initial planning figure of 120 000.

1 June 1988: Details of the 1988–89 immigration program were announced by the Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs. Australia plans to accept 140 000 migrants in 1988–89, an 8000 increase on the revised planned total for 1987–88. The planned total would include: 35 000 places under Family Migration, 30 000 under Skilled Labour and Business Migration (including 8000 under the Occupational Shares System, 10 000 under the Employer Nomination Scheme and 12 000 under the Business Migration Program), 45 500 under Independent and Concessional Migration, 12 000 under the Refugee and Special Humanitarian Programs (with contingency for a further 2000), 1500 under special eligibility, and 14 000 under Change of Status.

30 June 1988: Expanded monitoring and an evaluation of the Business Migration Program were announced by the Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs. The evaluation would assess: the Program's success with regard to the Government's economic objectives which aim to bring net benefit to Australia through the creation of jobs, the transfer of technology to Australian hands, the generation of exports and a reduction in imports; the performance of accredited Business Migration Program agents, and; the cost-effectiveness of the $1.5m spent on promotion of the Program in 1987–88.

23 August 1988: The introduction of a new single application fee of $200 for people seeking to migrate to Australia was announced in the 1988–89 Commonwealth Budget. The new fee would replace the current two-stage fee of $60 paid on lodgement and $165 paid upon further processing.

8 December 1988: Major changes to the immigration program were announced in the Government's response to the Fitzgerald Report. The migration program for 1989–90 would total 140 000 and would include three main streams — Family Migration (71 000), Skilled Migration (54 000), Humanitarian Migration (14 000) — plus a small special eligibility category (1000). Each stream would be capped to ensure the program did not overrun targets. Family Migration will include Immediate Family (estimated 41 000) and Extended Family (estimated 30 000) elements with the distinction between these two elements partly made according to a new 'balance of family' criterion for parents. Numbers under the Immediate Family element will be subject to demand, while a new points test with a 'floating passmark' will be used to allocate remaining Family Migration places among Extended Family applicants. Skilled Migration will include Employer/Business (estimated 21 500) and Labour Force Enhancement (estimated 32 500) elements. The Employer/Business element will include the Business Migration Program (estimated 10 000), the Employer Nomination Scheme and tripartite negotiated arrangements (estimated 11 500), and a special skills group (estimated 500). Numbers will be subject to demand. The Labour Force Enhancement element will include the Occupational Shares System (estimated 9000) and Independent migrants (estimated 23 500) . A new points test (different to that applied to Family Migration) with a 'floating passmark' will be used to allocate remaining Skilled Migration places among applicants from the Labour Force Enhancement category. The existing Independent and Concessional category would be split, with Independents selected under Skilled Migration and Concessionals under the Extended Family category of Family Migration. The Self-supporting Retiree category will be abolished. The period of effect of Assurances of Support lodged by sponsors will be extended to five years. The process for reviewing immigration decisions would be reformed with the establishment of a statutory two-tiered system of review. The first tier would involve statutory and independent review by a unit within the Department, while the second tier would involve review by a reformed Immigration Review Panel. The Secretary of the Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs, rather than the Minister, would become the principal decision-maker on most immigration cases.

Citizenship

8 March 1988: A campaign to encourage all eligible residents to take out Australian citizenship was launched by the Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs.

7 August 1988: The Prime Minister announced that 1988–89 would be declared a 'Year of Citizenship' with a campaign to encourage as many eligible people as possible to take up Australian citizenship.

Links with Social Security

25 May 1988: Introduction of a system whereby the Department of Social Security obtains the Assurance of Support records of DILGEA to assist in determining eligibility for Special Benefit was one of the measures announced in the May Economic Statement to tighten the administration of income support payments.

Occupational Shares System

26 October 1988: The occupation shares for skilled migration in 1988–89 were announced. The 1988–89 Schedule has places for 2900 workers.

Bureau of Immigration Research

3 November 1988: Development of a high-level research capability within the Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs was identified by the Minister as a major priority within the immigration portfolio.
8 December 1988: Establishment of the Bureau of Immigration Research was announced by the Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs as part of the Government response to the Fitzgerald Report. The role of the Bureau would be to undertake major research studies and to foster public understanding of immigration issues. The Bureau would be located within the Department and would have an in-house research capacity, but would also commission academic and commercial research. The Bureau would be coupled with upgraded consultative mechanisms which would include Immigration Outlook conferences.

Housing — 1987

Compiled by Anthony King
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Crisis Accommodation Program

17 February 1987: Grants amounting to $2.3m for crisis accommodation projects in Queensland under the Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP) were announced by the Minister for Housing and Construction. (CAP was introduced in the 1984 Commonwealth–State Housing Agreement, is linked to the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program under DCS and received a national allocation of $14m in 1986–87).
30 March 1987: A package of housing assistance policy decisions, jointly announced by the Treasurer and Minister for Housing and Construction, included a commitment of at least $14m a year under the Commonwealth–State Housing Agreement for the Crisis Accommodation Program over the next three years.
27 May 1987: An allocation of $15.5m for the Crisis Accommodation Program in 1987–88 was announced by the Minister for Housing and Construction.

Local Government and Community Housing Program

11 March 1987: The third Local Government and Community Housing Program (LG&CHP) National Workshop, in Sydney, was addressed and opened by the Minister for Housing and Construction.
30 March 1987: A package of housing assistance policy decisions, jointly announced by the Treasurer and Minister for Housing and Construction, included a commitment of at least $11m a year under the Commonwealth–State Housing Agreement for the LG&CHP over the next three years.
27 May 1987: An allocation of $12m for the LG&CHP in 1987–88 was announced by the Minister for Housing and Construction.

Review of Housing Assistance Measures

30 March 1987: Policy decisions following a review of housing assistance measures were jointly announced by the Treasurer and Minister for Housing and Construction. As a result of the review, the Government decided: the savings banks housing subsidy, due to expire on 31 March 1987, will not be renewed; the 13.5 per cent ceiling on savings banks interest rates for housing loans made prior to April

1986 should remain; the savings banks regulations will be amended to reduce the reserve asset ratio from 15 per cent to 13 per cent of deposits; the income limits for the First Home Owners Scheme (FHOS) would be lifted; funding for public housing under the Commonwealth–State Housing Agreement would be maintained at $700m; and all States would be allowed to nominate up to 60 per cent of the loan component of their State government borrowing program for public housing.

First Home Owners Scheme

30 March 1987: Increased income limits under the First Home Owners Scheme (FHOS) were jointly announced by the Treasurer and Minister for Housing and Construction following a review of housing assistance measures. The new limits include the introduction of more generous limits for applicants with dependent children. Under the revised limits, applicants with two or more dependent children would be eligible for a $6000 grant if their taxable incomes are less than $26 000 and a reduced grant with taxable incomes up to $34 000. For applicants with one dependent child, the maximum grant will be $5500 and income limits will be $25 000 and $33 000. For applicants without dependent children, the maximum grant will be $4000 and the income limits $23 000 and $31 000 in the case of joint applicants, and $11 500 and $15 500 in the case of single applicants.
15 September 1987: The 1987–88 Commonwealth Budget provided $222m for the FHOS.

Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement and Loan Council Borrowing

30 March 1987: Following a review of housing assistance measures, the Treasurer and Minister for Housing and Construction jointly announced that funding for public housing under the Commonwealth–State Housing Agreement would be maintained at $700m in 1987–88. At least $700m each year would be provided in 1988–89 and 1989–90. It was also announced that all States would be allowed to nominate for public housing up to 60 per cent of the loan component of State government borrowing.
13 May 1987: A $1000m reduction in general purpose payments from the Commonwealth to the States in 1987–88 was announced by the Treasurer in the May Economic Statement. The division of this reduction between general revenue grants and general capital assistance would be determined at the Premiers' Conference.
24 May 1987: The alignment from 1 July 1987 of funding arrangements for public housing in the ACT with the financial assistance for the States and Northern Territory under the Commonwealth–State Housing Agreement was jointly announced by the Minister for Territories and the Minister for Housing and Construction.
25 May 1987: The outcome with regard to housing of the 1987 Premiers' Conference was announced by the Treasurer. As previously announced, the Commonwealth would provide $700m in grants in 1987–88 to the States and Northern Territory under the Commonwealth–State Housing Agreement. The reduction in general purpose payments announced in the May Economic Statement would include a $715m cut in general purpose capital assistance. Given this reduction, the Commonwealth will permit the nomination for public housing of up to 100 per cent of the borrowing component in 1987–88.
27 May 1987: Allocations of Commonwealth–State Housing Agreement funding for 1987–88 among programs and States were announced by the Minister for Housing and Construction. The $700m in grants would include: $550m in untied grants, $37.5m in rental assistance for pensioners, $60m in rental assistance for Aboriginals, $25m for Mortgage and Rent Relief, $15.5m for the Crisis Accommodation Program, and $12m for the LG&CHP.

International Year of Shelter for the Homeless

10 March 1987: Federal Government activities in support of the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless (IYSH) were outlined in an address by the Minister for Housing and Construction. The United Nations objective for IYSH is to encourage countries to develop plans that will improve the shelter and neighbourhoods for the homeless and inadequately housed by the year 2000. Federal Government financial commitments to IYSH amounted to $100 000 in 1984–85, $650 000 in 1985–86, and $625 000 in the current financial year. The Minister expected that IYSH activities by a range of participants in the government, community and private sectors would yield by the end of 1987: broad agreement and better understanding of the nature and extent of needs of the homeless and inadequately housed in Australia; new insights into the effectiveness of existing housing and housing-related assistance programs; evaluations of a wide range of demonstration projects; advice on priorities for future assistance, and; documentation of the experience gained through IYSH activities.
6 May 1987: The Minister for Housing and Construction discussed the Australian Government's response to IYSH in a speech to the ACT Division of the United Nations Association of Australia.
23 May 1987: The National Women's Housing Conference was held in Sydney with support from the IYSH Program.
15 September 1987: Funds totalling $300 000 for the IYSH program were provided in the 1987–88 Commonwealth Budget.

Housing — 1988

Compiled by Anthony King
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Social Justice Strategy

2 May 1988: 'Towards a Fairer Australia', a report detailing the Government's actions in the area of social justice and the agenda for further reform, was released by the Prime Minister. The report included a section on housing policy.

Commonwealth–State Housing Agreement and Loan Council Borrowing

12 May 1988: A reduction of $650m in general purpose financial assistance to the States was agreed at the 1988 Premiers' Conference.
17 May 1988: Allocations of CSHA funding for 1988–89 among programs and States were announced by the Minister for Housing and Aged Care. The $700m in grants would include: $530.6m in untied grants, $37.5m in rental assistance for pensioners, $70m in rental assistance for Aboriginals, $26.4m for Mortgage and Rent Relief, $19.5m for the Crisis Accommodation Program, and $16m for the LG&CHP.

Crisis Accommodation Program

17 May 1988: An allocation of $19.5m for the Crisis Accommodation Program in 1988–89 was announced by the Minister for Housing and Aged Care.

Local Government and Community Housing Program

17 May 1988: An allocation of $16m for the LG&CHP in 1988–89 was announced by the Minister for Housing and Aged Care.

First Home Owners' Scheme

25 May 1988: Reductions in the levels of assistance available under the First Home Owners Scheme (FHOS) were announced by the Treasurer in the May Economic Statement. The maximum benefit payable to all categories of applicants would be reduced by $1000, including a $500 reduction in the lump sum and $500 reduction in continuing subsidy payments where applicable. Single applicants and joint applicants without dependents would no longer have the choice of taking a lump sum/subsidy option.
23 August 1988: The 1988–89 Commonwealth Budget provided $178m for the FHOS.

Review of Housing Assistance

27 July 1988: The Minister for Housing and Aged Care outlined the content of a housing policy review currently being conducted. The purpose of the review was to examine the adequacy of current government programs and to develop future housing policy options. The first phase of the review was an internal departmental analysis of current policies and programs. The second stage, to be formally announced later in the year, would involve wide consultations with the States, industry, union and housing groups. Among the issues to be examined by the review are: better integration of housing assistance for specific disadvantaged groups, improvements to the CSHA, more effective delivery of home-ownership subsidies, and options for improving rental assistance.
9 September 1988: The Minister for Housing and Aged Care announced that the current review of housing policy was not looking at the issue of taxation of home-owners and affirmed that the Government would not introduce any form of capital gains tax or imputed rent tax for home-owners.

Land for Housing Development

11 December 1988: The establishment of a taskforce of senior public servants to identify Commonwealth land which could be sold for housing development was announced by the Prime Minister. The taskforce would work closely with the Housing Industry Association and report within three months.

Health — 1987

Compiled by Diana Encel
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Community Health

15 January 1987: The Minister for Health announced grants under the National Community Health Program to the Psoriasis Association, to the Australian Teenage Cancer Patients Society, the Australian Down's Syndrome Association, to the Australian and Queensland Community Health Associations (for a project to improve the delivery of health care to women in isolated areas and to other disadvantaged women). The Australian Community Health Association has also received a grant to develop and implement the Community Health Accreditation and Standards Project.

14 April 1987: The Health for All Committee (also known as the Health Targets and Implementation Committee) was established by the Australian Health Ministers Conference (AHMC) to build on the recommendations of the Better Health Commission set up in 1985, the Review of the Community Health Program, State/Territory health goals and the views of voluntary agencies and the private sector. The Committee will report through the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council (AHMAC), before the WHO Health Public Policy Conference to be held in Adelaide in 1988.

19 May 1987: The Commonwealth Government has funded the Australian Diabetes Foundation to enable it, and its State associations, to supply syringes and testing agents at subsidised rates from 1 September 1987.

22 May 1987: A new national project aimed at providing health education for Australian school children — the Health Education and Lifestyle Program (HELP) was launched by the Federal Minister for Health.

9 June 1987: A grant of $70 000 has been made to the Nursing Mothers Association of Australia (NMAA) to train Association counsellors to assist new mothers breastfeed their babies.

28 June 1987: A 'Health Cities' pilot project was launched by the Minister for Health. It will be developed and co-ordinated by the Australian Community Health Association with Commonwealth grants amounting to approximately $200 000 a year. The pilot will involve Noarlunga, Canberra and Wollongong.

21 December 1987: The Minister for Community Services and Health announced funding of more than $12 million for a wide range of projects funded under the National Community Health Program in this financial year. The grants will support the activities of 34 projects already being conducted by national organisations representing community service groups. They include grants to the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, for its Family Medicine Program, the Public Health Association of Australia and New Zealand, the Australian Community Health Association, the Australian Teenage Cancer Patients Society and the Women's Health Development Program.

National Diseases Control Program

16 January 1987: Commonwealth funds to the extent of $534 700 will be allocated to the mainland States and the Northern Territory, on a dollar for dollar basis, for the control of mosquito-borne diseases. The announcement was made by the Minister for Health in South Australia on this date and in the other states in the following weeks.

Medical Education and Workforce Enquiry

20 January 1987: An inquiry into medical education and the medical workforce is to be established. The members of the inquiry and the proposed terms of reference were announced by the Minister for Health.

Drug Abuse Program

21 January 1987: The Minister for Health convened a meeting of Federal, State and Territory Ministers with representatives of the wine industry, to discuss issues of concern about marketing and promotion of wine coolers. The matter will also be discussed at a meeting of the Alcohol Sub-committee of the Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy.

13 February 1987: The meeting of Ministers with wine cooler producers agree to a reduction in the alcohol content of wine coolers and a national minimum of one-litre size paperboard packs. Changes to labelling was agreed.

15 April 1987: A $27 million cost-shared anti-drug program for 1987–88 — the third year of the National Campaign Against Drug Abuse — was announced at the Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy. A further $9 million is to be provided by the Federal Government for national research, information and education programs, including the Drug Offensive. Two major anti-drug campaigns, focusing on under-age drinking and illicit drug use will be launched as part of the Drug Offensive. New standards controlling packaging and labelling of wine and other alcoholic coolers were agreed at the

meeting of Ministers for Health, and will come into effect on 1 July 1987. These include the standards agreed on 13 February.

2 July 1987: The Minister for Health launched an education kit, *Straight Talking*, designed to help teachers of 14 and 15 year-olds in secondary schools. The 1985–86 report, *Taking the Initiative*, was also released. It provides details on the range of programs being undertaken in education, treatment and rehabilitation and law enforcement to combat drug abuse.

15 September 1987: The National Campaign against Drug Abuse enters its third year with a further 6.9 per cent increase in its funding, to bring the total Commonwealth contribution under the 1987–88 Budget to $25.8 million. During this year it will support over 210 projects with increased research activities.

6 November 1987: The Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy agreed to formulate, in consultation with industry, effective uniform regulations to control the packaging and labelling of mixed alcoholic beverages, following the earlier agreement on interim standards. The Ministerial Council also agreed to a national media campaign, the National Alcohol Abuse Campaign, to begin early next year as part of the Drug Offensive. The target group will include people with non-English-speaking backgrounds, women, Aborigines and, particularly, young people. The media campaign is only one element of a multi-faceted strategy. The special Minister of State announced funding for the Drug Offensive for the next three years.

21 December 1987: Funds amounting to $658 885 will be provided for 16 drug education projects. Aboriginal and young people, women, prisoners and people from non-English-speaking backgrounds form the target groups.

22 December 1987: Funds from the Research into Drug Abuse Program have been allocated to the Centre for Multicultural Studies at the University of Wollongong. It is the first time funds have been committed to a project aimed specifically at improving the provision of drug and alcohol services for ethnic Australians.

Drug Evaluation

27 January 1987: A special meeting of the Australian Drug Evaluation Committee (ADEC) has concluded that some of the data used to help gain marketing approval for certain drugs was not reliable. The Government advised doctors accordingly.

19 February 1987: An independent review of the drug evaluation functions of the Commonwealth Department of Health will be carried out under a three member steering committee to be chosen by the Public Service Board. The terms of reference were announced by the Minister for Health.

August 1987: A Public Service board report was released recommending changes to the legislative basis of drug regulation and the management of drug evaluation procedures.

Therapeutic Devices

2 February 1987: Amendments to the *Customs (Prohibited Goods) Regulations* came into effect, requiring the approval of the Department of Health for the import of a range of devices. Guidelines were released, to be followed when seeking approval to market or trial devices in five designated categories.

12 March 1987: The Minister for Industry, Technology and Commerce and the Minister for Health announced a rationalisation of import controls on some clinical equipment. Permission to import will no longer be required. Monitoring, as appropriate, will be carried out under the provisions of the Medical Device Program; condoms and diaphragms will continue to be subject to control under the *Therapeutic Goods Act 1966*.

August 1987: A nationwide program to identify defective therapeutic devices was introduced. The Therapeutic Good Committee was created to advise the Minister on the need for, and adequacy of, standards for therapeutic goods.

National Campaign Against Measles

2 February 1987: The National Campaign against Measles was commissioned by the Federal Government in conjunction with State and Territory governments as a special Bicentennial Health initiative with funds amounting to $600 000. A national radio campaign will also be funded.

7 April 1987: The Minister for Health announced, on World Health Day, an additional $260 000 for the National Campaign against Measles.

8 September 1987: The Minister for Community Services and Health announced that the Government will provide a further $1 million towards the campaign against measles, bringing to almost $2 million the amount to be spent in the first two years.

Australia Card

5 February 1987: The Federal Government decided to amend the Australia Card Bill before introducing it in the coming parliamentary session. The changes would be limited to improvements in the implementation of the program, including clarification of the wide array of safeguards embedded in the legislation.

2 April 1987: The Australia Card legislation was rejected in the senate.

5 June 1987: The rejection of the Australia Card Bill provided the grounds for the dissolution of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

International Health Conference

12 February 1987: The Federal Minister for Health announced that the Government and the World Health Organisation are sponsoring a major international conference on health promotion in Adelaide in 1988, with healthy public policy as its basic theme.
21 December 1987: Dates for the conference were announced, for April 1988.

Health Research

16 February 1987: The inaugural meeting of the Public Health Research and Development Committee was held. The committee, within the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) structure will support and assist with the development of research proposals, and allocate funds for research in public health. Between 1986–87 and 1988–89 the Committee will distribute funds amounting to $2.85 million.
2 April 1987: The Minister for Health is signing agreements with Universities and other institutions to upgrade public health teaching and research. Grants are to be made to the new NHMRC Public Health Research and Development Committee, the Australian Institute of Health, eight universities and the Queensland Institute of Medical Research. Specific programs are to be undertaken at each institution.
1 July 1987: The Australian Institute of Health in Canberra became a statutory authority. The Institute was set up in 1984. As an independent body it will now develop and control the collection of national health statistics and co-ordinate research into public health and health services. It will be a reference centre on the causes of death and the classification of disease in Australia.
15 September 1987: Funds to be allocated for medical research through the NHMRC under the 1987–88 Budget will be $64.4 million representing an increase of just over 9 per cent. Budget commitments will take the Government's support for health research programs to a total of $84 million in 1987–88.

Hospital Waiting Times

14 April 1987: Australia's Health Ministers at their meeting this week agreed to explore a variety of ways to reduce the waiting times in the nation's public hospital systems. While accepting that the States and Territories have primary responsibility for the administration and delivery of public hospital services, the Commonwealth could provide assistance to help them overcome their problems
18 June 1987: The Government released details of funding for the initiatives agreed at the Ministers' meeting. An additional $25 million a year is allocated over the next two years to assist the States in tackling particular problems for some forms of elective surgery in State hospitals. The funding will be on a dollar for dollar basis with the States.
25 September 1987: The Commonwealth 1987–88 Budget confirmed the funding previously announced.

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

30 April 1987: The basis for Commonwealth Government cost-sharing with the State governments of the AIDS treatment drug Axidothymidine (AZT) was announced by the Minister for Health. The special grant will be over and above the normal AIDS cost-sharing grants. The pilot evaluation study will involve 200 AIDS patients for 12 months at a total cost of $2 million. It will be conducted by the Special Unit in AIDS Epidemiology and Clinical Research set up by the NHMRC, under the direction of the AIDS Task Force.
7 May 1987: The Minister for Health has invited his counterparts from thirty-one countries in South East Asia and the Western Pacific to a conference on AIDS in Sydney in July 1987, to be held in collaboration with the World Health Organisation.
15 September 1987: The 1987–88 Budget provides for a 78 per cent increase in funding for AIDS projects (bringing expenditure to a total of $20.5 million) including research education and prevention programs. An allocation of $6.3 million will be made available to the States to develop their own initiatives for education, counselling, treatment and support services out of hospitals. Funds to the amount of $2.1 million have been allocated on a cost-shared basis with the States, for screening of blood donations.
27 October 1987: The Minister for Community Services and Health announced that an Australian-initiated United Nations resolution on AIDS, designed to promote international co-operation and co-ordination in the global fight against the disease was passed unanimously by the UN General Assembly.
2 November 1987: The Government will provide $226 622 in 1987–88, to the Australian Federation of AIDS organisations for its fight against the disease.
18 November 1987: The Haemophilia Foundation of Australia is to receive up to $150 000 from the Government in 1987–88, to combat transmission of AIDS. Funds amounting to $508 967 in 1987–88, have been allocated to the National Reference Laboratory for AIDS. Aboriginal health workers have been allocated funds to educate Aboriginal people about AIDS.

Medical Fees and Benefits

13 May 1987: The Minister for Health announced an increase in Medicare Benefits Schedule Fees by an average of 6.1 per cent, to be introduced from 1 August. Provision has been made for an increase in pathology fees to apply from 1 November.
9 September 1987: Changes to basic private health insurance benefit levels, including new benefits for psychiatric and rehabilitation patients, were announced by the Minister for Community Services and Health, to take effect from 1 October. There will be an increase of 12 per cent in the minimum benefit levels payable under the private health insurance basic table and the benefit for day hospital treatment will increase by $10 to $100.
19 November 1987: An increase of 6.62 per cent in Medicare Schedule fees and benefits for pathology services from 1 December was announced by the Minister for Community Services and Health. The increase was recommended by the newly established Pathology Services Advisory Committee as part of a program to reduce fraud and overservicing in the pathology industry.

Women's Health

18 June 1987: The Government will contribute for 2 years to a program to evaluate and co-ordinate selective trials of breast cancer screening in mature women. It will also contribute to a three-year program, shared with the States, to establish and evaluate cervical cancer screening services, particularly for women in rural areas.
15 September 1987: The Government will fund new initiatives directed at dealing with breast and cervical cancer. During the year $1.1 million will be spent on the evaluation and co-ordination of mammography screening trials and evaluation of improved cervical screening services. A further $2 million is committed to these services in each of the following two financial years. These commitments were election promises, confirmed in the 1987–88 Budget.
October 1987: A national subcommittee of the Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council met for the first time to help develop a national policy on women's health.

Reciprocal Health Care Agreements

30 June 1987: The Minister for Health announced that a draft reciprocal health care agreement has been finalised between Australia and Malta. A draft treaty has also been finalised with Sweden.

Administrative Change

July 1987: A new Community Services and Health portfolio has been created which will have responsibility for community services, health programs and housing assistance programs, as well as Aboriginal Affairs and Veterans Affairs programs.

Pharmaceutical Benefits

13 September 1987: The Minister for Industry, Technology and Commerce, and the Minister for Community Services and Health jointly announced policies to encourage the growth of a pharmaceutical products industry in Australia. There will be changes to pricing procedures, involving the replacement of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Pricing Bureau with an independent authority. Other changes include extensions to the patent life of pharmaceuticals for human use, an assessment of the level of activity being undertaken by an applicant company in Australia, the reintroduction of a generic pricing policy, changes to wholesaler's margins and certain tariff changes.
15 September 1987: The Government is to introduce amendments to the *National Health Act*, to improve the procedures for listing drugs for subsidy under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. The terms of reference of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee, which makes recommendations to the Minister, are to be revised. The changes will mean that comparative efficacy and cost will be taken into account when considering which drugs to subsidise.
29 October 1987: The Minister for Veterans' Affairs, representing the Minister for Community Services and Health on pharmaceutical matters announced that 44 per cent of approved pharmacists have accepted the Commonwealth Government's offer of 2.5 cents per prescription for participating in a computerised Claims Transmission Scheme which enables pharmacists with compatible computer systems to make direct claims for Pharmaceutical Benefits payments.
14 December 1987: Epileptics will pay $1.30 per script less for the Dilantin range of products from 1 April 1988. Pensioners will receive their medication free.

Diet Campaign

2 December 1987: A 'More or Less Diet' campaign was launched as a focus to improve the nation's health during the bicentennial year. The nutrition content is based on the publication *Dietary Guidelines for Australians* which was developed by the department.

Health — 1988

Compiled by Diana Encel
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Women's Health

13 January 1988: More than $1 million will be provided to the Australian Institute of Health over the next three years to co-ordinate and evaluate breast and cervical cancer screening projects. A further $5 million has been committed in grants to five states to enable ten projects on breast and cervical cancer screening to go ahead as part of the national evaluation.
2 March 1988: A discussion paper *A Framework for Change*, aimed at formulating a strategy to improve the quality of health care for Australian women, has been released by the Federal Government. The policy was drafted in conjunction with the National Agenda for Women, and followed consultation with women in the States and Territories. A final National Policy on Women's Health is expected late in 1988.
4 May 1988: The Government will provide funds for a conference to be organised by the Australian Cancer Society, to take place in June, to consider how often women should be screened for cervical cancer.
30 May 1988: Grants totalling $2.997 million over three years were announced by the Minister for Community Services and Health, to evaluate breast and cervical cancer screening services, as part of the initiatives announced in the 1987–88 Budget.
26 July 1988: The Australian Radiation Laboratory is to conduct a survey to establish the range of radiation doses currently being used in mammography. The survey will provide data essential to the NHMRC formulation of recommendations for radiation levels for mammographic imaging.

National Diseases Control Program

15 January 1988: In 1987–88 the Commonwealth Government, under the National Diseases Control Program, will provide $412 000 to the mainland States and the Northern Territory on a dollar for dollar basis to maintain efforts to prevent the spread of mosquito-borne diseases. The Minister of Community Services and Health announced additional funding of $67 000 for research and public education programs. Funding of the program has been reduced in the 1987–88 financial year to facilitate full resumption of mosquito control by the States. Commonwealth participation in the program will cease at the end of this financial year.

Health Research

22 January 1988: An independent Chairperson has been appointed to the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) for the first time since its inception in 1937. The position has previously been held by the incumbent Secretary of the Federal Department of Health. The policy change results from the 1987 internal review of the NHMRC.
10 May 1988: Federal Government funding of $96 243 was announced today for four new health services research and development projects.
11 May 1988: Eight research projects investigating nutrition and cardiovascular disease have been approved by the Minister for Community Services and Health. The funding, worth $199 000, is through the Public Health Research and Development Committee of the NHMRC.
1 June 1988: The NHMRC meeting in Adelaide released a number of statements. A *Code of Practice for the Design and Safe Operation of Non-Medical Irradiation Facilities* has been approved, establishing requirements for those facilities that use x-rays, electron or gamma radiation for non-medical purposes such as the sterilisation of laboratory equipment or therapeutic goods. A working party has been established on Environmental Toxicology, to report to the Public Health Committee of the NHMRC by September. New Guidelines have been endorsed for the Food, Science and Technology Sub-committee, to assess biotechnologies used in food production. A new warning to appear on cigarette packets has been recommended (Smoking during pregnancy is hazardous to the unborn child). A National Register of Asthma Mortality was established and other measures to deal with the problems of asthma sufferers will be instituted.
2 June 1988: A set of *National Guidelines for the Management of Clinical and Related Wastes* were approved. A revised *Code of Practice for the Control and Safe Handling of Radioactive Sources Used for Therapeutic Purposes* has been approved. It acts as a guide to safe practices in the use of sources of radiation in medical practice, and in the management of patients in radiotherapy departments.
23 August 1988: The 1988–89 Budget provides funds for medical research through the Medical Research Endowment Fund amounting to $68.6 million, an increase of $4.3 million. The NHMRC will receive an additional 55 per cent taking its funds to $1.9 million.
29 November 1988: The Minister for Community Services and Health has approved nearly $1.5 million for 48 new research projects in public health. The projects were selected by the Public Health Research and Development Committee of the

NHMRC, to address problems in the areas primary health care, community mental health, cardiovascular disease, diet and nutrition and cancer of the cervix and of the breast.

International Health Conference

2 February 1988: Australia will be the venue the Second International Conference on Health Promotion, to be hosted by the World Health Organisation and the Australian Commonwealth Department of Community Services and Health, in April, in Adelaide. The theme will be Healthy Public Policy.
24 March 1988: The Minister for Community Services and Health released details of a significant policy blueprint for the future of Australia's health, to be presented on World Health Day, 7 April, at the Second International Conference on Health Promotion. The document was prepared by the Health Targets and Implementation (Health for All) Committee and was endorsed in principle by the Australian health ministers meeting this month.
6 April 1988: A *Directory of Health Resources* was launched at the International Conference on Health Promotion. It is the result of a National Health Promotion Program grant to the Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (ACPHER).

Royal Flying Doctor Service

15 February 1988: The Government has provided $3 million to the Royal Flying Doctor Service for the purchase of capital equipment. This is an addition to the $7.02 million provided in the 1987–88 Budget for operational expenditure.

Family Planning Program

16 February 1988: The Minister for Community Services and Health announced that the Government will provide $10.506 million this financial year to non-government organisations for the provision of family planning services. Migrant women will be the focus of one grant, which will fund a fertility survey among recently arrived Lebanese, Turkish and Vietnamese women, the results of which will be used to plan appropriate services.
28 April 1988: The Minister for Community Services and Health announced a grant ($5000) under the Government's Family Planning Program to help identify women who are at risk of becoming pregnant even when taking oral contraceptives.
19 December 1988: The Federal Government will provide $11.1 million nationally this financial year to non-government family planning agencies.

Medical Fees and Benefits, Medicare

19 February 1988: The Minister for Community Services and Health announced the introduction of Medicare benefits for computerised radiotherapy planning. The new benefits, based on Schedule fees of between $29.50 and $260.00, apply to services provided by existing private practices using their own equipment. The benefits are an interim arrangement pending the implementation of arrangements to ensure the most appropriate mix of radiotherapy services between public and private sectors.
2 May 1988: The majority of Australian Health Ministers, at a meeting to re-negotiate Medicare hospital funding arrangements, gave in-principle endorsement to the Federal Government's offer of a new $3063 million specific purpose health grant. The Minister for Community Services and Health announced the proposal which includes a base grant of $3043 million distributed on an age and sex-weighted population base and a special incentive package to address specific problem areas such as AIDS, day surgery and palliative care.
23 August 1988: The 1988–89 Commonwealth Budget will provide $125 million over the next three years to assist the States and Territories to upgrade public hospital clinical services.
20 September 1988: A full review of the Medicare pathology services will be undertaken following on an interim revision of the table recently completed by the Pathology Services Advisory Committee.

Drug Abuse Program

23 February 1988: The Minister for Community Services and Health announced funding for a workshop organised by the National Primary School Drug Educators, to take place in Melbourne on 15–18 March.
30 May 1988: Government funding of $193 778 was announced for seven projects to be undertaken for the Research into Drug Abuse Program of the National Campaign Against Drug Abuse (NCADA). The projects cover a range of drug abuse research including education, prevention and treatment.
26 September 1988: The Minister for Community Services and Health announced funding of $576 000 to the States and Territories in 1988–89 to support continued development of the National Drug Abuse Data Scheme (NDADS).
29 November 1988: Three research projects into problems associated with drug abuse have received Commonwealth Government funding of almost $140 000. Two of the projects will research problems faced by Aboriginal people and one seeks to encourage secondary school students to stop smoking.
16 December 1988: Six research projects were given funding of $215 000. A grant of $34 450 to the

Australian Medical and Professional Society on Alcohol and Drugs was also announced, to boost drug education resources.

Community Health and Health Promotion

24 February 1988: The Minister for Community Services and Health announced details of grants to ten programs for health promotion and illness prevention. The projects funded are nationally-oriented and are in line with the Better Health Commission's 1986 Report. Further grants under the National Community Health Program were announced on 2 March, 8 April and 8 June 1988.
23 August 1988: The 1988–89 Budget allots $41 million to target preventive strategies to people most vulnerable to injuries and diseases which can be avoided. The Government will commit $20.5 million over the next four years, to be matched by participating States and Territories, to initiatives designed to improve the overall health status of Australians.
26 August 1988: Grants to 14 groups chosen by the Consumers Health Forum were announced, for research and education in the health field.

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

2 March 1988: Grants to community groups, totalling $606 636, as part of the 1987–88 National AIDS Education Program were announced by the Minister for Community Services and Health. The grants, 18 in number, have been recommended by a special Working Group of the National Advisory Committee on AIDS.
March 1988: The Australian National council on AIDS (ANCA) was established to advise on all aspects of AIDS. It replaced the National Advisory Committee on AIDS and the AIDS Task Force. A national AIDS Forum was foreshadowed, whose role will be to ensure that the Minister and ANCA maintain close communications with other key individuals and organisations involved in efforts to stem the AIDS epidemic.
15 April 1988: Further grants to community groups totalling $11 490 were announced as part of the 1987–88 National AIDS Education Program.
17 May 1988: Travellers arriving in Australia will now be warned against AIDS, by leaflets to be placed in passenger's passports by Customs officers. The Minister for Community Services and Health said that Australia is one of the first countries to target international travellers, in line with a World Health Organisation recommendation.
21 July 1988: The Government is to provide $3.75 million over the next two and a half years to two special units in AIDS research — the Special Virology Unit at Fairfield Hospital, Melbourne and the Special Unit in AIDS Epidemiology and Clinical Research administered by the University of New South Wales.
11 August 1988: The Haemophilia Foundation of Australia will receive up to $187 600 from the Federal Government in 1988–89 to combat transmission of AIDS.
23 August 1988: The Federal 1988–89 Budget has provision for $40.5 million for this year for programs to fight AIDS. The States have been allocated $27.9 million of which $15.1 million is provided under Medicare. The grant is indexed for rises in numbers of AIDS cases.
4 November 1988: The Minister for Community Services and Health announced AIDS research grants totalling more than $2.2 million. When added to projects already approved, the amount committed is $7.6 million, of which expenditure in 1988–89 will be $3.5 million. The projects will begin in 1989, with the duration of studies to range from one to three years.

National Bioethics Consultative Committee

18 March 1988: The Minister for Community Services and Health announced the composition of a new committee to advise Australian Health Ministers on bioethical and associated legal and social issues. The National Bioethics Consultative Committee was endorsed by all Australian Health Ministers at a recent meeting.

Nutrition and Diet

27 April 1988: The Minister for Housing and Aged Care, opening a symposium on 'Nutrition for Australian Children' announced the release of interim findings of the 1985 National Dietary Survey of School Children, conducted by the Department of Community Services and Health. The report was released by the Minister for Community Services and Health on 28 October, 1988.

In Vitro Fertilisation

11 May 1988: A discussion paper, prepared by the Department of Community Services and Health, on funding options for Australia's $30 million-a-year in vitro fertilisation (IVF) programs was released by the Minister. Also released was a report on IVF prepared for the government by a research organisation, Diagnosis Ltd. The papers examine IVF from a cost perspective and do not address ethical issues.

Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme

25 May 1988: In the May Economic Statement the government announced a number of measures to reduce the cost of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), without placing any financial burden on patients. The maximum contribution for the general public will rise from $10 to $11, although the actual average cost will be substantially lower.
28 August 1988: Guidelines were released for the prescription under the PBS of growth hormone for children who suffer deficiencies in natural growth hormone.
24 October 1988: Prescribing restrictions on a number of drugs on the authority list of the PBS will be relaxed on 1 December 1988. However the authority mechanism will continue to be used to encourage more cost-effective prescribing. The list of drugs affected was released by the Minister for Community Services and Health.

Committee of Inquiry into Medical Education and the Medical Workforce

15 July 1988: The findings of an inquiry into the education, registration, number and distribution of Australian doctors were released today by the Minister for Community Services and Health and the Minister for Employment, Education and Training. A departmental team is now assessing the report of the Committee of Inquiry into Medical Education and the Medical Workforce.

National Biological Standards Laboratory

23 August 1988: The Government has approved the construction of a new building for the National Biological Standards Laboratory (NBSL), with funds amounting to $59.2 million allocated in the 1988–89 Budget.

Aboriginal Health

7 September 1988: A report looking at issues affecting older Aboriginal people was released by the Minister for Community Services and Health. The report had been commissioned to encourage debate and contribute to the process of developing appropriate services for older Aborigines.

Index

Aborigines
  assistance for students, 5
  education policy, 7
  employment and training, 18
  health, 37
  information programs, 3
  language, 7
  rent assistance, 29
ABSTUDY, 5
Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome *see under* AIDS
Administrative Appeals Tribunal, 7
Administrative Decisions Judicial Review Act, 21
Adult Migrant Education Program (AMEP), 22
Adult Training Program (ATP), 14, 18
Advisory Council on Multicultural Affairs, 23
  establishment, 23
  national agenda, 23
Aged, 9, 12
  accommodation for Aborigines, 10
  ethnic groups, 12
  hostel accommodation, 9
  national aged care policy, 9
  nursing homes, 9, 12
  report on, 10, 12
  residential care, 9, 12
Aged Care Advisory Committee, 9
AIDS
  Axidothymidine (AXT) evaluation, 32
  conference, 32
  education programs, 36
  funding, 32, 36
  research, 36
  research grants, 36
  warnings to international travellers, 36
alcohol abuse
  marketing of wine coolers, 30
  media campaign, 30
apprenticeships, 18
asthma
  national mortality register, 34
Australia Card, 31
Australian citizenship, 26
Australian Council for Health Physical Education and Recreation (ACHPER), 35
Australian Institute of Health, 32
  funding, 34
Australian Law Reform Commission
  report on Contempt, 20
  report on Matrimonial Property, 20
Australian National Council on AIDS (ANCA), 36
Australian Radiation Laboratory, 34
Australian Taxation Office, 21
Australian Traineeship System (ATS), 17
  funding, 15, 17
Australian Women's Employment Strategy, 19
AUSTUDY, 5

Bankruptcy Act, 21
benefits *see under* pensions and benefits, or names of specific pensions or benefits, for example Unemployment Benefit, Sickness Benefit
breast and cervical cancer, 34
  screening services, 34
Bureau of Immigration Research, 25, 27
Business Migration Program, 23

Campbell Report, 22
Carer's Pension
  eligibility, 5
child care, 7
  see also family day care
  fee subsidies, 7
  for Aborigines 11
  for children with special needs, 7
  funding, 7
  grants, 7
  home-based, 7
  isolated areas, 7
  management consultancy service, 7
  outside school hours, 8
Child Disability Allowance (CDA), 1
child maintenance, 21
  court-based collection agencies, 6
  ex-nuptial children, Queensland, 6
  income testing, 6
  legislative formula, 20
Child Support Act, 21
Child Support Agency, 3, 6, 21
Child Support Consultative Group, 6
Child Support Scheme
  Senate endorsement, 6
  toll free hotline, 7
children
  abduction, 20
  custody and access, 20
  dietary survey, 36
  disability allowance, 1
  maintenance (after marital breakdown), 21
  occasional care, 7
  protection policy, 1
  sexual abuse, 20
Children's Legal Service
  establishment, 21
children's services, 7, 11
  Aboriginal child care, 11
  children with disabilites, 11
  ethnic children, 11
  funding, 7
  Queensland, 11
  resource materials, 11
Children's Services Program, 7
  funding, 11
Code of Practice for the Control and Safe Handling of Radioactive Sources used for Therapeutic Purposes, 34
Code of Practice for the Design and Safe Operation of Non-Medical Irradiation Facilities, 34
Comcare, 6
  benefits, 6
Committee of Inquiry into Medical Education and the Medical Workforce, 37
Committee to Advise on Australia's Immigration Policies, 23, 25
Commonwealth Employees Compensation and Rehabilitation Commission, 4
Commonwealth Employment Service (CES), 2, 14
Commonwealth State/Working Group on Skills Shortages and Skills Formation report, 14
Commonwealth–State Housing Agreement, 27, 29
  funding, 29
  State funding, 29
Community Child Care Co-Operative Ltd, 7
Community Employment Program, 14
community health, 30
  grants, 36
Community Training Program (CTP), 13, 17

Community Volunteer Program (CVP), 13
Community Youth Support Scheme (CYSS), 13
  projects, 17
Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, 20
courts
  cross-vesting, 22
Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP), 27
  1987–88, 27
  1988–89, 29

Dementia Grants Program, 8
  day care centres, 8
  special hostel programs, 8
Department of Community Services and Health, 33
Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET), 15, 17
Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs
  access to services, 25
  decentralisation, 25
  links with Department of Social Security, 26
  research, 27
  services, 25
Department of Social Security (DSS)
  information in an Aboriginal language, 7
  information in Torres Strait Island language, 7
  services for remote communities, 7
Department of Social Security Review *see under* Social Security Review
diet
  national guidelines, 33
  survey of school children, 36
Disability Council of Australia (DACA), 12
disability services, 12
  grants for new projects, 9
  National Self Advocacy Project, 12
  rehabilitation, 8
Disability Services Act 1986, 4
Disability Services Program
  funding, 12
Disabled Child Allowance, 1
disadvantaged groups
  economic independence, 7
disease control
  funding, 30, 34
drug abuse
  education kit, 30
  education projects, 30, 35
  funding, 35
  programs, 30
  research, 35
drug regulation
  evaluation, 30

employment, 13
  affirmative action programs, 14
  commonwealth employees compensation, 4
  community-based programs, 13
  strategy for women, 19
  wage subsidy programs, 19
environmental toxicology, 34
Equal Employment Opportunity (Commonwealth Authorities) Bill, 14

Family Allowance, 5
  children overseas, 1
  eligibility, 1
  income testing, 1
Family Allowance Supplement, 1, 5
  means testing, 1
  migrant families, 3
Family Court Additional Jurisdiction and Exercise of Powers Act, 54
family day care, 11
  subsidies, 7
family law
  arbitration, 21
  child abduction convention, 20
  contempt, 19
  report on child abuse, 21
Family Law Act, 20
Family Law Act Amendments, 21
family planning services
  funding, 35
  migrant women, 35
  non-government, 35
Family Support Program, 10
  Western Australia, 10
First Home Owners Scheme (FHOS), 28
  eligibility, 29
Fitzgerald Report, 25, 27
Formal Training Allowance (FTA), 15

Geriatric Assessment Program, 9
Grant-in-Aid Scheme, 22, 25
grants, 7
  community health, 30
  dementia programs, 8
  disability projects, 9
  health, 30
  housing, 28
  medical research, 34, 35
  migrant education, 21
  migrant welfare services, 21, 25
  Royal Flying Doctor Service, 35

Handicapped Child's Allowance, 1
health
  community programs, 30
  directory, 35
  education for school children, 29
  grants, 30
  international agreements, 33
  national policy for women, 33
  policy, 34
  preventive strategies, 36
  research, 32, 34
  services, 34
  services for older Aborigines, 37
  services for women, 33
Health Benefit Card
  fringe benefit level, 3
Health Education and Lifestyle Program (HELP), 30
Health for All Committee, 30, 35
health insurance
  see also Medicare
  benefit levels, 33
health promotion
  international conference, 32, 34
Health Targets and Implementation Committee, 29, 35
Home and Community Care (HACC)
  funding, 11
  home maintenance services, 8
  new services, 11
  research project, 8
homeless, 28
hospitals

Commonwealth funding, 35
funding, 32
housing
assistance policy, 27
development on Commonwealth land, 29
mortgage and rent relief, 29
policy, 29
rent assistance, 3
review, 29
Housing Industry Association, 29

immigration
appeals, 23
economics, 23
ethnic affairs policy, 23, 25
Fitzgerald report, 25, 27
intake, 23, 25
program 1987–88, 23, 25
program 1988–89, 26
selection criteria, 25
settlement programs, 25
Immigration Review Panel, 23
in vitro fertilisation (IVF)
discussion paper, 36
report, 36
income support
policy, 1
Information Technology Centres (ITECs), 17
International Year of Shelter for the Homeless, 28
funding, 28
interpreters, 3

job hunting
young people, 3
Job Search Allowance, 2, 5
Job Search Training Program, 16
Jobs, Education and Training (JET), 19
Jobstart, 19
funding, 15
JOBTRAIN, 18
Jurisdiction of Courts (Cross-vesting) Act, 22

labour market programs, 14, 18
see also training, and names of specific programs, for example, NEW-START, Jobstart, JOBTRAIN
languages,
national policy, 24
local employment initiatives
report, 16
Local Government and Community Housing
Program, 29
funding, 27, 29
low-income families
rent assistance, 1

maintenance for children *see under* child maintenance
matrimonial property, 20
measles
national preventive campaign, 31
Medical Education and Workforce Enquiry, 30
medical fees and benefits, 33, 35
medical research
funding, 32, 34
public health, 34
Medical Research Endowment Fund, 34
Medicare, 35
benefits schedule, 33
fees and benefits, 33
hospital funding arrangements, 35
new benefits, 35
pathology services, 35
migrant and multicultural programs
review, 22
Migrant Project Subsidy Scheme, 22, 25
Migrants
accommodation, 22
application fee, 23, 26
business application, 23
closure of hostels, 22
information programs, 3
intake for 1987, 23, 25
intake for 1988, 26
occupation shares system, 23, 26
skilled, 16, 23–26
welfare services, 22, 25
Migration Act 1958, 22

National Advisory Council on Social Welfare
(NACSW), 4
National AIDS Education Program, 36
National Alcohol Abuse Campaign, 31
National Bioethics Consultative Committee, 36
National Board of Employment, Education and Training
(NBEET), 16, 18
National Campaign Against Drug Abuse (NCADA),
30, 35
National Campaign Against Measles, 31
National Community Health Program
grants, 30
National Diseases Control Program, 30, 34
funding, 35
National Drug Abuse Data Scheme (NDADS)
funding, 35
National Guidelines for the Management of Clinical and Related Wastes, 34
National Health and Medical Research Council
(NHMRC), 34
recommendations, 34
New Enterprise Initiative Scheme (NEIS), 16, 19
NEW-START, 16, 19
Northern Australia Development Unit (NADU), 7
nursing homes, 9, 12
staff training, 12
Nursing Homes and Hostels Legislation Amendment Bill 1987, 9

Occupational Shares System, 23, 24, 26
Office of Multicultural Affairs, 22
Office of Labour Market Adjustment, 19
programs, 19
Orphans Pension
eligibility, 5

pensioners
casual employment, 2, 3
rent assistance, 3, 6
tax rebates, 7
pensions and benefits
see also under names of specific pensions or benefits,
for example, Carer's Pension, Sickness Benefit,
Special Benefit
and compensation, 2, 5
asset test, 6
eligibility, 2, 5
fringe benefits, 3, 6
income test, 3, 7
investment income, 5
rates, 2, 5

rent assistance, 6
pharmaceutical benefits, 33, 37
Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), 37
public health *see under* health
Public Health Research and Development Committee, 32, 34
public housing *see under* housing

reports and discussion papers
Access: Some Options for Reform, 20
Arbitration in Family Law, 20
Australian Law Reform Commission's Report on Contempt, 20
Australia's Population Trends and Prospects 1987, 24
Bringing Up Children Alone Policies for Sole Parents, 4
Child Sexual Abuse Report, 21
Child Support — Formula for Australia, 21
A Framework for Change, 34
Immigration — A Commitment to Australia, 25
Income Support for the Unemployed: Towards a More Active System, 6
Local Employment Initiatives: A Strategic Approach, 16
National Policy on Languages, 24
Towards a Fairer Australia, 29
Towards a National Retirement Incomes Policy, 6
Towards Enabling Policies: Income Support for People with Disabilities, 6
Residential Care Program for Aged People, 12
Royal Flying Doctor Service, 35
Rural Information Service, 10

Sheltered Employment Allowance
eligibility, 6
Sickness Benefit, 6
eligibility, 5, 6
new rate, 5
Skills Training Program, 16, 19
Skills Transfer Scheme, 25
Skillshare, 17
funding, 17
social justice
agenda for reform, 7
for long-term unemployed, 7
for sole parents, 7
for youth, 17
report, 17
social security
Aboriginal community agents, 3
conspiracy case, 4
dual eligibility, 1
overseas payments, 5
payments, 1
Social Security Act 1947, 4, 22
Social Security Advisory Council, 4
social security benefits
see also pensions and benefits, and under names of specific pensions or benefits, for example, Unemployment Benefit, Supporting Parent's Benefit
social security reciprocal agreements
with Canada, 6
with Italy, 6
with New Zealand, 4, 6
Social Security and Veteran's Entitlement (Maintenance Income Test) Amendment Act 1988, 6
Social Security Appeals Tribunal, 3, 7
Social Security Review, 1, 4
issues papers, 6
sole parents
adult training, 2, 18
child care, 2
fringe benefits, 2
full-time study, 2
Special Benefit
eligibility, 5
new rate, 5
Special Temporary Allowance (STA), 7
Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP), 8, 11, 27
crisis accommodation, 8
review of, 11
services for homeless people, 8
Supporting Parent's Benefit, 5
co-residence after separation, 2
eligibility, 2
overseas payments, 5

The Accommodation Rights Service (TARS), 13
therapeutic devices, 31
Torres Strait Island
language, 7
Trade Practices Act, 21
training
Aborigines, 15, 18
budget paper, 15
for adults, 14, 18
funding, 18
human services sector, 13
industry involvement, 17
long-term unemployed, 19
programs, 15
skills development, 15, 16, 19
sole parents, 19
sole parents allowance, 15
trades, 16, 18
youth, 16

unemployment
long-term, 1
Unemployment Benefit, 2, 5
assets test, 2
eligibility, 5
hardship eligibility, 2
increase, 2
rate, 5
review team, 1

Volunteer Youth Program, 13

wage subsidy programs, 19
see also under names of specific programs, for example, Jobstart, NEW-START
Widow's Pension
overseas payments, 5
women
apprenticeships, 18
employment and training, 19
health, 33, 34
national agenda, 34
national health policy, 34
Women's Consultative Committee, 4
Women's Employment, Education and Training Advisory Group, 19

Year of Citizenship, 26
Young Homeless Allowance, 5
Youth Access Centres (YAC), 14
Youth Social Justice Strategy, 17
Youth Training Program, 16, 18

Diary of Social Legislation and Policy

This is the seventh in a series of annual publications. From the 1984 issue, the Diary has been produced by the Australian Institute of Family Studies in co-operation with the National Institute of Economic and Industry Research, Melbourne, and the Social Welfare Research Centre (since 1989, the Social Policy Research Centre), University of New South Wales.

The Diary summarises the legislative and administrative changes made by the Commonwealth government in the areas of social security and community services, employment, education, family law, immigration, housing and health during 1987 and 1988.

Other Diaries in this ongoing series are for the years 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, and 1985–86.

The series follows the format of earlier diaries within the books titled *Public Expenditure and Social Policy in Australia* (Vols I and II) prepared by Helen Ferber of the Institute of Economic and Social Research, which cover the years 1972 to 1978. Since there is a year's gap between the end of the Public expenditures volumes and the beginning of the present series, each of the first three issues summarises one aspect of social policy for the year 1979. The 1980 Diary covers immigration; that for 1981 covers social security and welfare; and the 1982 issue covers health.

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Notes

The *Diary of Social Legislation and Policy* summarises the legislative and administrative changes made by the Commonwealth government in social security and community services, employment, education, family law, immigration, housing and health.

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